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JOURNAL

OF A

TOUR

FROM

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ASTRACHAN TO KARASS,

North of the Mountains of Caucasus;

CONTAINING

REMARKS ON THE GENERAL APPEARANCES OF THE COUNTRY, MANNERS OF THE INHABITANTS, &c.

WITH THE SUBSTANCE OF

MANY CONVERSATIONS WITH EFFENDIS, MOLLAS, & OTHER MOHAMMEDANS,

ON THE QUESTIONS AT ISSUE BETWEEN THEM AND CHRISTIANS.

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM GLEN,

MISSIONARY, ASTRACHAN.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR OGLE, DUNCAN, AND CO. AND J. NISBIT, LONDON;

AND DAVID BROWN, EDINBURGH.

1823.

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EXPLANATION OF FOREIGN WORDS USED IN THE JOURNAL.

Angilc, (it should be *anjeel*) the Gospel,—the New Testament.

Arba, a common Tartar cart.

Arbatchi, the driver of ditto.

Conact-house, a house for lodging strangers ; a caravansera.

Effendi signifies Master or Lord ; a title given to priests who have received a more learned education than others, after returning from some eminent seminary.

Gewr (should be *giaour*) an infidel.

Hagi, a pilgrim who has visited the Caaba at Mecca.

Kibitki, a kind of covered cart or waggon.

Mirza, an inferior prince, next in rank to a Sultan.

Molla, the priest of a village, one who can read and write.

Mufti, a high priest.

Nogar, one who is obliged to live always along with a particular Mirza or Uzden.

Nogarlik, the relation of the nogar to his master.

Priestoff, a civil officer.

Shube, a large cloak of sheepskin or fur.

Steppe, a waste uncultivated plain or desert.

Sultan, a Tartar prince.

Tourat, the Law, or Pentateuch.

Verst, about three-fourths of an English mile.

Zabur, the Book of Psalms.

Zemlinka, a house below ground.

Wyden (erroneously printed for *Uzden*) a nobleman next in rank to a Mirza.

JOURNAL.

OF A

TOUR FROM ASTRACHAN TO KARASS.

All things being in readiness for commencing the projected tour to Karass, I left the mission house, Astrachan, on Friday 8th October, a little after nine o'clock, A. M. and, accompanied by Messrs Jack, Dickson, Mitchell, Macpherson, and others, proceeded to the banks of the Volga, for the ferry between Astrachan and the Calmuc steppe, on the right bank of the river. In order that every thing connected with the journey might be done agreeably to the police of the country, a passport for myself, signed by the committee of our colony at Karass, and another for John Abercrombie, one of the ransomed Circassians, were presented and regularly entered at the ferry passport-office; after which we took our seats in the passage boat, and bade adieu, for a time, to the capital of the ancient kingdom

of Astrachan. When crossing the river, which, at the ferry, may be from two to three versts in breadth, we had a delightful view of the shipping in the harbour and roads, and of the churches, spires, and other public buildings of the city; as well as of the island on our right in the midst of the Volga, and the varied scenery which met the eye, the moment it was directed to the opposite shore. In the course of about half an hour, we reached the landing place, when an obstacle occurred, which we feared might occasion us considerable inconvenience. The Tartar, whom we had engaged to conduct us to Georghievsk on the Russian lines, lived about two versts above the ferry at the village of Selonka, where he was to wait our arrival; and to our astonishment we found, on making enquiry, that of all the carts usually about the place, there was not a disposable one to take our luggage to his quarters, the last of them having left it just as we landed. In about a quarter of an hour, however, we descried some of the carriers on their way back from the village, which superseded the necessity of sending a messenger on purpose. On their arrival, one of them was instantly engaged; and having committed the care of the luggage to John Abercrombie, we set off on foot, at an easy pace, for Selonka. Scarcely had we left the ferry, when our attention was arrested by huge columns of

smoke, which indicated the breaking out of a fire among some of the buildings in the suburbs of Astrachan, north of the Culum. In a few minutes, flames were perceptible amid the volumes of smoke which issued, in close succession, from the place where the fire had begun; and ere we had advanced half-way to Selonka, the buildings seemed all in a blaze. How impressive the scene! associated, as it instantly was, in our feelings and reflections, with the anguish that might be rending the hearts of some of our fellow-creatures, on being driven out of their habitations by a merciless element which threatened their complete destruction. Happily, however, in less than an hour, the smoke began to subside, which encouraged the hope that the progress of the conflagration had been so far arrested, as to prevent its communication to the adjacent houses, though the appearance of the flames furnished but too good reason for apprehending that the buildings where it had broken out, had been burned to the ground.

Arrived at Selonka about mid-day, when we found the Tartar ready to receive us. The vehicle, in which he had agreed to take us to Georghievsk, was a Tartar arba; which, in its structure, very much resembles a carrier's cart, with this difference, that it is much more unwieldly and clumsy. Like our carts, it has only two wheels, (about five feet in diameter)

whereas the Russian carriages, from the chariot of the noble to the telega of the peasants, have four. The length of the arba from end to end, I should think, is at least thrice the diameter of its wheels, which, in connection with the elevation given it by the height of the axle, is apt, at first sight, to produce a repulsive sensation, by suggesting the idea of its being very liable to be overturned; an apprehension for which there is much less reason, I understand, than one would naturally imagine from its appearance when in motion; as not to speak of the care with which it is balanced, the extent of surface presented by the wheels, prevents them from sinking so far in soft ground, as less ones must do under the same weight, and in this respect contributes to their security. When intended for the accommodation of travellers, the arba is fitted up with a kibitki or covering, which is sometimes made of wood; in which case, it might pass for a similar vehicle, known on the banks of the Clyde, by the high sounding name of *a caravan*; but more frequently of good stout hoops, over which is thrown a covering of felt or mats, when it might bear a comparison with a covered cart: and though less agreeable in its appearance, it is in reality the more comfortable of the two, the length of it being more than sufficient to allow a man to stretch himself upon it as a bed, which is seldom the case with an

apparatus of the kind in Scotland. The arba in which I was to have the honour of riding through the steppe, was of the latter description, which I preferred to the other vehicles of higher pretensions, from a wish to make trial, in the first instance, of the travelling accommodation in common use among the Tartars, and thus to ascertain what was to be expected or feared from it in subsequent excursions, when it might not be at my option to make a choice. Besides the covered arba or kibitki, we had a second one with a supply of books and other articles for our brethren at the colony; and it gave us no small pleasure to find there was to be a third one in our train, with two young deacons who had been receiving orders from his holiness the archbishop of Astrachan and Caucasus. Our number, after all, was small, compared with some cavalcades that are accustomed to traverse the desert; yet when reinforced by the deacons, we looked upon ourselves as sufficiently formidable to keep thieves and other banditti at bay, should they venture to molest us; particularly as John was armed with a brace of excellent pistols, which had already been on duty of a similar kind under my brother Mr Macpherson, in his passage down the Volga for Astrachan.

The luggage being packed, and every thing ready for our departure, the arbatchi (driver)

took the road for the steppe with his three arbas; and being engaged in conversation, we followed a few yards behind, till we came to the western extremity of the village, where, after being commended by the brethren to the protection of Heaven, I took my leave of them, and having reached the arba which was under John's care, I took possession of my new lodgings, and entered the desert. For a time the feelings excited by the parting words and looks of my friends, by the charge I had left behind me in Astrachan, and the objects of my mission, occupied too much of my heart to leave room for those trains of thinking which might otherwise have secured my attention, as we advanced into the steppe. I remarked in general, that the soil was much the same with that to which I had been accustomed in the suburbs of the city east of the Volga—consisting chiefly of a mixture of fine sand and clay, of a brownish red colour, and producing a scanty crop of grass and saline herbs, which leads to a conclusion, which I understand has been repeatedly verified by experience, that it is strongly impregnated with salt. The afternoon being remarkably fine, the lake, which from time to time appeared in sight, reflecting the sun beams from their crystal surface, had a pleasing effect on the imagination, and led the thoughts to Him whose power is every where felt, and whose glory is declared by all

his works; while the steppe, though no where so elevated as to present the appearance of any thing greater than ridges or hills of sand, rose occasionally so far above the general level as to afford a greater variety than I had anticipated. Passed the quarantine about four o'clock, and the first post-house on the road to Kisliar about sun set; and having advanced a verst or two beyond it, we halted and made preparations for passing the night by the side of a small lake, the waters of which were acceptable to all, while its margin had the additional recommendation of presenting a supply of grass for our arbatchi's horses.

No sooner had we taken up our position, than John, to whom this mode of passing the night was familiar, repaired to the lake and secured a supply of water, though not without considerable difficulty, on account of the miry texture of the soil on which he had to approach it. The next part of the process was striking a light and kindling a fire, which was formed of the fuel in common use among the Tartars and Calmucs in the steppe. Of this I had often heard, though I do not recollect having had an opportunity of seeing it employed for such a purpose. It is *dry dung* picked up as it lies in the field or collected in the stall, and baked into cakes resembling the peat turf of Caledonia.

In fifteen or twenty minutes, the boiling of

the kettle served as a signal for preparing our tea, which was served up on the cover of a basket I found it convenient to use in the double capacity of a depository for our victuals and a table. I made a hearty meal, partly by the light of the moon which arose in the east just as the twilight began to disappear, and partly by that of a farthing candle, one of a few which we had succeeded in procuring from a Tartar in Selonka, to supply the place of better ones which we neglected to provide ourselves with before leaving Astrachan. Supper being ended, I prepared for retiring to rest in the kibitki, while John secured to himself a convenient spot by the side of it, to repose under the open canopy of heaven; which mode of passing the night is customary with the natives, when on a journey, during the summer months, and was preferred by him, that he might be at a moment's warning to assist the arbatchi in repelling the assault, if any attempt was made to steal the horses in the course of the night.

Oct. 9. Having awaked from the slumbers of night, I turned aside the curtain which overhung the entrance into the kibitki, and from the diminished brightness of the moon, inferred the approach of dawn—the signal for renewing our journey. My night's rest—comfortable, upon the whole, though less so than

it might have been, owing to the slopping position of the arba, which I had not taken the precaution to bring to a proper level, the consequence of which was, that I found it necessary, at times, to make a kind of effort through my sleep to regain the ground I had lost, from slipping insensibly down the inclined plain on which I reposed. In the course of a few minutes, tea was served up in the same style that had been adopted last night, which I found to be very convenient; and scarcely had the rising sun cleared the horizon, when our arbatchi and his cavalcade were again in motion. Having heard that the Calmuc wells, &c. on the road which runs directly through the steppe for the Kumas, were, in consequence of the long drought, almost completely dried up, he had resolved, for the sake of securing water, to follow the Kisliar road to the ninth stage from Astrachan, and from that point to cross the steppe by the south road; consequently we had the prospect of having the tædium of travelling slowly amid barren sands, beguiled, in part, by the incidents we might have an opportunity of witnessing on meeting with travellers and others on their way to Astrachan. Passed the second post-house in the course of the forenoon, and halted about mid-day on the margin of a lake, where the horses slaked their thirst with the cooling draft, and cropt the herbage among the reeds;

while our party refreshed themselves by partaking of the bounties which God had provided for them. The appearance of the steppe was the same to-day as yesterday, beautified here and there with lakes of various dimensions; the borders, and sometimes patches in them, being set off with reeds, which presented a picture of luxurious vegetation of its kind, and formed a striking contrast with the withered surface of the adjacent wilds; while parties of geese and other kinds of wild fowl, sometimes on the wing, sometimes moving gracefully on the surface of the waters, or basking in the sun-beams on some favourite spot on shore, made us almost forget that the region we were traversing was a wilderness. John, who is naturally of an active temper, having a wish to shew his dexterity in the use of fire arms, carefully watched the most favourable opportunities of getting unobserved within pistol shot of the tenants of the lakes, when contiguous to the path pursued by the arbas; but owing to the short distance to which the shot carried, the birds (though one of them, he tells me, was actually wounded) uniformly succeeded in effecting their escape, which made him regret that he had not brought a good musket along with him, as in a fowling excursion it would have done more execution than both pistols, though, perhaps, it might not have

been found quite so handy in an encounter with banditti.

Resumed our journey at two, and about four came in sight of a Tartar village, inhabited, I understand, by persons in the service of Government, whose business is to collect and prepare salt from a large lake in the neighbourhood, the waters of which, like those of many others in the steppe, are strongly impregnated with this mineral, while the bottom of it furnishes large quantities of it in a state of crystallization, which, on being dug up at proper seasons, is brought to the village, and piled up in large masses, which, having rectangular bases, and summits exactly resembling the pavilion roofs of so many large churches, presented an appearance, as a whole, to which I do not recollect of having ever seen an exact parallel. Passed the third post-house from Astrachan, and took up our position for the night a little in advance of it, before the evening twilight had entirely disappeared.

Oct. 10. Left our quarters about six o'clock, after a comfortable night's rest, and having passed a cluster of Calmuc tents, reached a small lake a little beyond them, the water of which, at the ford where we crossed it, had almost entirely subsided, leaving a thick crust of salt at the bottom, which, in its appearance, bore a striking resemblance to that of frozen

snow when washed by a limpid stream, which in a gentle thaw, serves to shew its crystalline character to advantage. In the afternoon the surface of the country, to a vast distance before us on the south, appeared one continued plain, with not a hill or ridge to terminate the view, except a few slight elevations on the east and west. After entering the plain, we found that for several versts the surface of the road and of the steppe, on both hands, was of fine sand, lying in wreaths exactly like those of driven snow, varying from a few inches to as many feet in depth, and having the interstices between them swept, in many cases, as clean as a barn floor, and all by the wind of the wilderness. On the west, at the distance of a verst or two, the wreaths were much larger, so as to vie, in some measure, with the sand hills on the west coast of Scotland, between Saltcoats and Irvine, which they forcibly brought to my recollection. About five, halted at a kind of police-office, at which it was necessary for us to shew our passports, which being done, we continued our course; passed a group of Calmuc tents inhabited by Tartars, and having reached a convenient spot, somewhat farther onward, and not far from the fifth post-house, we stopped, and retired to rest about eight o'clock.

Oct. 11. Was much molested last night by

moschitoes, which for some hours bit the hands and face so severely, that my slumbers were broken every few minutes. Made various attempts to wrap myself so completely up in my blanket, as to secure myself from their attacks, but in vain. The restless creatures became more and more active as the moon approached her zenith, and did their business so effectually, that before midnight sleep was banished from the eyes of our whole party. John having overheard me tossing from side to side, in the kibitki, asked if I was disturbed by the moschitoes; and being answered in the affirmative, told me that he and the deacons finding it impossible to sleep, had gone in quest of dung; the smoke of which, he assured me, would soon banish them from our quarter. A fire was forthwith kindled, when the assailants began to retreat from the open field, but maintained their position in the kibitki, which served them as a kind of citadel. In order to dislodge them, John had recourse to a stratagem which he had little doubt would succeed. Having seized a large cake of smoking dung, he introduced it into the very centre of their tenement, which of course was soon filled with fumes; to the odour of which, though far from being agreeable, I submitted, in the hope of being relieved from a more serious grievance. A slight pause insued in the humming

music, with which my ears had for hours been saluted. Finding, however, that it had not entirely subsided, he introduced a second cake, much larger in its dimensions than the first, and studded round and round with red embers. Happily the stratagem succeeded: and whether from disgust at the smoke, or dread of the sparkling embers, I leave it to others to determine; but so it was, that the moschitoes betook themselves to flight, and left me in quiet possession of the kibitki. Wrapped myself up in my blanket, and slept soundly for about three hours, till the smoke having subsided, the vanquished foe returned to the charge. On consulting my watch, I found it wanted about twenty minutes of four. The moon was shining bright, John and the deacons were in close conversation, and the arbatchi murmuring in Tartar, O! my poor horses, my poor horses, have got no rest for these moschitoes; while he was, at the sametime, making preparations for our departure. In these circumstances, instead of resuming offensive operations, by once more fumigating the kibitki, I sprung to my legs and walked about a few minutes till breakfast was ready; choosing rather to breakfast at this early hour, than put off till we halted near mid-day. Understood from John that the arbatchi's horses had been on the point of meeting with a more powerful, if not a more vexatious assault than they had met

with from the moschitoes. A thief had approached them when their master was asleep beside them; but as he happened to awake, the thief rode off without deigning to answer him as he exclaimed, Who are you, and what do you want?

Left our lodging place about half past four. About nine the Astrachan mail for Kisliar passed us. Halted a little before the sun had reached his zenith, nearly a verst beyond the seventh post-house, having passed the sixth in the course of the morning;' was informed by the arbatchi, that at a small distance beyond the rising ground, on the northern declivity of which we had dined, there was a considerable lake, the shores of which were, in a manner, covered by the skeletons of fish, which it was supposed had been wafted thither a few years ago in the waters of the Caspian, when, in consequence of a mighty wind from the east, it rose so far above its ordinary level, as to inundate a vast extent of country on its western shores, where it left multitudes of the finny race to expire on the steppe, or in fresh water lakes, and retired to its ancient bed. Impelled by curiosity, I repaired to the spot, and viewed with astonishment the relics of the tenants of the Caspian, scattered along the shore in the manner reported by the arbatchi. Soon after leaving the lake, observed a dark cloud, which gradually thickened and extended itself

as we advanced, till it overspread the sky, and began about sun-set to distil its watery treasure on the parched earth.

Oct. 12. On looking out of the kibitki, was gratified to find the sky clear, and the morning promising. Passed the eighth post-house at an early hour, and having reached within musquet shot of the ninth one, struck off from the Kisliar road, and pursued our course westward for the Cuma. Dined a short way beyond the post-house. About three in the afternoon passed from six to eight clusters of Calmuc kibitkis or tents, situated on our left; and as we advanced through a large plain, were delighted by the prospect of numerous flocks of black cattle and sheep, with a great many camels grazing all around us. As a whole, it was one of the finest pictures of pastoral scenery, quite in the eastern style, that had ever met my eye; and on viewing it, the mind was naturally led to think of the beautiful allusions made to pastoral scenery and manners, by Moses and the prophets, and by Christ the chief shepherd, and his apostles. The grass, too, on which the cattle were feeding, was much superior to any thing we had met with in the steppe till now; a circumstance which, by the influence of contrast, tended in no small degree to enhance the effect produced on the mind by the prospect before us. Travelled

till about seven without reaching water, though the arbatchi believed he was at no great distance from it; and as the moon was not expected to rise till near midnight, he halted, and deferred going in quest of it till the morning.

Oct. 13. In the course of the night, overheard John calling out to the deacons that the arbatchi, horses and all, had disappeared. Having met in council, they resolved to go in quest of him; a resolution to which I made no objection, forgetful that the moment they did so, I was left alone in the midst of the desert; and though the pistols were in the kibitki, I believe I should have been able to make but a feeble resistance had I been assailed even by unarmed banditti, before their return; but as the idea did not strike me at the time, it gave me no uneasiness. The result of the search was, that the arbatchi was found, in a sequestered spot at a little distance, fast asleep, with the horses grazing beside him. John went past him very softly, in the first instance, that his slumbers might not be disturbed; but being less cautious in coming back, the arbatchi started up in a fright, supposing it to be a thief on the point of seizing his horses. His alarm subsided, however, on recognizing him to be one of our own party; and after finding

water, he returned to our quarters and prepared for renewing our journey. The morning was so foggy, that, when on the point of departing, about eight o'clock, one of the deacons, mistaking the direction, had set his face towards Astrachan, in the view of taking a short excursion, as he frequently did, in advance of the arbas. To ascertain the direction we were about to take, I had recourse to a small pocket compass with which I had been presented by a friend in Astrachan, and found it to be nearly due west. Having the compass in my hand, I shewed it to the deacon, who, by this time, had been called back, and to his companion; both of whom were mightily amused with its movements, the one of them never having seen an apparatus of the kind, and neither having much knowledge of its nature and use till they were explained to them. For about two hours after our departure, the road was at times very heavy, owing to the rain water which had collected in the flats between the gentle ascents with which the surface was diversified, but afterwards it became light and smooth as a bowling green. Before, and on either side of us, the surface was apparently level, and thinly covered with the remains of herbage which, a few days before, had been nipped to the roots, very probably by the flocks we passed yesterday; it being customary for the Calmucs to move with their whole sub-

stance from one part of the steppe to another, and to pitch their tents where they find a new supply of good pasturage for their cattle.

About two o'clock observed, a little in advance of us, a range of small sand hills, the texture of which, like that of the wreaths we had passed on the 10th, seemed to be quite loose. On coming within about a stone cast of them, John leaped out of the arba with a view to take an excursion on foot, but in a few minutes returned in haste, and took his seat, finding it almost impossible tb advance, on account of the sand which was drifted about, by a stiff breeze, like snow, than which, it was much more offensive to the eyes. Having crossed the sand hills, we observed a lake before us, a little to the left, to the banks of which we repaired and halted for dinner; during which, two Calmucs made up to us and conversed a while with the arbatchi. They were the only human beings we had seen since we left our halting place in the morning. After dinner, continued our course westward till about ten o'clock, when we prepared for retiring to rest, in the hope that in the course of to-morrow we might get within sight of the Cuma.

Oct. 14. Left our quarters soon after daybreak, and having past the salt mines, (if the name can be given to depositions of that mine-

ral in the bottom of the lakes) and came up with about a hundred waggons laden with their produce, a little beyond them. They belonged to Malo-Russians, and were drawn by oxen. The language of this people, though evidently of the same origin with the modern Russ of Moscow and St Petersburg, has the character of being extremely vulgar; partly in consequence of the liberal use of provincial words and phrases, but chiefly, it strikes me, on account of their peculiar accent, and the odd pronunciation they give to words of classic authority; which, after all, seemed to undergo no greater change when articulated by them in answering our questions, than standard English words do, when articulated by the peasants of Cumberland or Yorkshire. After passing the Malo-Russians, or, as they are vulgarly termed, *Khohols*, we observed about a dozen of Moscow Tshooshtchiks feeding their horses near a fresh water lake; and on making up to them, and accosting them, John found they were two days from Mozdok, and in the hope of reaching Astrachan in the course of five days more; being seven days to five hundred versts. The Moscow Tshooshtchiks have the character of being the best in the country. They feed well, and travel night and day for many successive weeks; and which is very remarkable, their horses are generally in as good condition, I am told, when their journey is

finished, as when it is begun. It is quite usual with them to travel from Moscow to Astrachan, for example, upwards of 1400 versts, without halting more than about two hours at each stage to feed their horses.

Continued our course through a large plain, and after dinner met a cavalcade of Calmucs in their progress to the east. Their baggage was carried on oxen, laden like pack horses, and the appearance of the whole group produced a peculiar sensation, which I cannot well describe, occasioned by the indications which it gave of extreme indigence, to which I was told they had been reduced last winter by a great mortality among their cattle, which constituted their wealth, under the loss of which, their religion supplied them with no solid consolation. I hope that ere long the condition of these poor wanderers will engage more of the attention of the friends of missionary enterprise in Britain, than it has hitherto done, and that the work of evangelizing them will soon be attempted by others beside the two solitary individuals stationed among them by the Moravians on the banks of the Volga.

Oct. 15. Left our quarters, as usual, before sun-rise, and had an agreeable ride along a vast plain, the surface of which was so level, that scarcely a hillock was to be seen, to relieve the eye, till nearly ten o'clock; when I observ-

ed something which I supposed might be a mountain range, overtopped by a cloud, from which it was distinguishable, merely by a slight shade of difference in its colour as it appeared through the haze. I asked John whether it was not a mountain or rising ground on the other side of the Cuma? Of this he seemed doubtful for a time, till the atmosphere becoming clearer, as the day advanced, he recognised it as forming part of the landscape beyond the river, the course of which was marked out to us by the trees upon its banks, which I welcomed, as serving to point out the extreme boundaries of the steppe, and the neighbourhood of a cultivated country. Instead of steering directly for the Cuma, however, we proceeded along the Mozdok road, in an oblique direction, for a village, a few versts beyond which, the north, the south, and the middle roads from Astrachan to Georghievsk meet. Reached the banks of the Cuma opposite the village, about half past three; and leaving the arbas, crossed the river, which, for the convenience of travellers, is at this place furnished with a wooden bridge, in the view of proceeding to the village to recruit our stock of provisions, which in our progress through the desert was nearly exhausted. But having procured the articles wanted, from a peasant at the end of the bridge, bread, for example, arbuses, and a few potatoes; the last of which,

till the Scotch missionaries came to Karass, were scarcely known on the Cuma, and are still considered as a rarity; and being more anxious to get forward on our journey, than make observations on a village about which, however inviting the appearance of its white-washed cottages, the most interesting circumstance to us, was its being the first we had seen since we passed the saltworks the day after leaving Astrachan. We retraced our steps, and having lodged our new stock of provisions in the arba, prepared for prosecuting the journey. Before leaving our station, however, I embraced the opportunity of measuring the span of the bridge, which I found to be about forty yards. The bed of the river, at the bridge, is deep, its clay-coloured waters troubled, and like those of the Solway Firth in a strong spring tide, almost completely despoiled of their brightest ornament—their transparency, its course rapid, and its banks, though merely on alluvial deposite, nearly perpendicular for a dozen or sixteen feet above the surface of the water. During a flood, it rises so high, I am told, as to sweep away the brush-wood and reeds of which the road along the bridge is formed; and, consequently to render it sometimes impassable for carriages, though its elevation above the bed of the river, is nearly the same with that of the banks on which it is placed.

Directed our course westward, with the river at some little distance on our left. Having learned at the bridge that some thieves who had begun to commit depredations on the Cuma, were apprehended last night in a neighbouring garden; and fearing we might be visited by persons of a similar description, one of the deacons and John set out in the twilight in quest of a favourable spot, in advance of us, on the side of the river, supposed to be a most eligible one for passing the night unobserved. We expected, of course, that after ascertaining where the retreat lay, they would be waiting for us on the road, and ready to conduct us to our quarters. In this, however, we were disappointed, and the arbatchi, after travelling till the twilight had nearly disappeared, had become impatient, it should seem, and trusting to his own sagacity, left the public road with his charge, and directed his course for the banks of the river. Ignorant of his movements, and suspecting no hazard from his mismanagement, I began to amuse myself by viewing the ursa major which was right before me, and observing its relation to the adjacent orbs. On withdrawing my eyes from the starry heavens, it struck me, from a blackness that I could not otherwise account for, that there was undoubtedly a deep hollow right before the horses; but before I had time to verify the conjecture by examining the place more closely, the arbatchi

who led the van in the uncovered arba, leapt out of it, crying out with a significant Tartar accent, prii, prii. The arba stopt as he uttered the words, and, apprehending that something seriously dangerous had extorted the exclamation, I sprung from my seat, and, on running forward, found one of the horses on the ground, the cart saddle on his neck, and his master attempting to relieve him, but without effect. Having renewed the attempt in conjunction, we succeeded in elevating the arba so far, that the poor animal was enabled to get up; but in consequence of its being actually turned the brow of a pretty steep declivity, which terminated in a hollow like the bed of a small river, we found it too much for us to take him out of the arba, and too adventurous to attempt going to the bottom of the declivity with him in, till the other deacon, who had left the arba to look out for his companion, on being repeatedly called, at length heard, and came to our assistance. He and I took each of us a side of the arba, and endeavouring so to balance it, as to enable the arbatchi to take out the horse, without being overrun by it, or buried under it, as there was reason to fear might be the case, had we persevered in making the attempt without the assistance of the deacon. Happily our efforts were crowned with success. The next point was to get the arba safely to the

bottom; an undertaking which, being much more difficult than was anticipated, required all our skill and strength to carry into effect. The covered arbas being lighter, were much more easily managed; and at length we had the satisfaction of seeing them all safely stationed in the very spot in quest of which (as we began to conclude from their nonappearance) the deacon and John had gone in vain. It consists of a small patch of ground on the banks of the Cuma, by which it is bounded on the south, while it is sheltered from the northern blast by a pretty steep natural embankment, the base of which has most probably been washed in its time by the waters of the river. The point at which he entered it, was the termination of the hollow bed, the gloomy aspect of which, intersecting the embankment, arrested my attention before the arba stopt; and the danger we had just escaped, was occasioned by the ignorance and rashness of the arbatchi; who, though generally cautious, approached the hollow in the dark, at right angles, and pushed forward at a place where the declivity is greatest, instead of pausing, in the first instance, till he had examined the nature of the ground, and found a place, which might easily have been done, where he could descend without hazard.

As the twilight had now given place to the darkness of night, and there was no appearance

of our reconnoitring party, I suggested to the deacon the propriety of going to the top of the bank and shouting aloud, in order that, if they were within hearing, he might recall them, but this he declined, being afraid that by calling out for his friend, he might betray our retreat to banditti. Though aware that such a consequence *might* follow, it struck me, that, in present circumstances, the supposition had a stronger claim to be ranked among the *possibles* than the *probables*, as if there *were* banditti wandering about, beside the gang apprehended last night, the probability was, they would make the attempt somewhere else rather than where the alarm was greatest, and the population more upon the watch; and feeling, moreover, that if I lurked in the valley and kept silence, I should not be doing to them as I should have wished them to do to me, I went repeatedly to the top of the bank, and supposing they might be on the contiguous road, hailed *alto voce*, but got no response. Returned to the vale, where, in a few minutes, we heard the sound of travellers on the road, and supposing his friend and John might be in the train, the deacon made off in quest of them, and having found them together as he had anticipated, on their way with the carriers to Majar, which is seven versts farther on, he announced to them our having secured the wished-for retreat, and brought them to the spot, to the no small joy

of our whole party. On their return, I found that John, being apprehensive that his new tooloop might, by its whitish gloss, betray both himself and his companion to the thieves of the Cuma, had turned it inside out; rightly judging, that the gray coloured wool of the inside, being much less shewey, might escape notice in the dark, in cases where the other side would discover him. After hearing an account of their fruitless expedition, and telling them of our labour in bringing down the arba, we prepared for rest, thankful, I trust, for the mercies of the day, and hopeful that no evil would befal us through the night.

Oct. 16. After a comfortable night's rest, and no molestation from banditti of any description, left the semicircular area soon after the break of day; and on observing the declivity down which we had brought the arbá last night, the danger we had escaped, struck me more forcibly than ever. What reason for unfeigned gratitude to the Father of mercies, whose watchful providence is every day furnishing fresh illustrations of the promise, "the sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night," in preserving his people from harm, as well from unforeseen contingencies, which, like the one adverted to, are not at all anticipated, as from obvious and formidable

evils; at the prospect of which, the heart is apt to faint, and the knees to tremble!

About eight, passed the village of little Majar, situated at a small distance from us on the Cuma, the road we pursued, running along a gentle declivity between the river and the comparatively elevated lands in the adjacent steppe. Viewed from the road, it has an interesting appearance, being ornamented by a respectable-looking church, and beautified by an extensive vineyard; the verdant foliage of which, tends much to enrich the landscape, which, if a perspective view of it were taken at an elegible spot on the confines of the steppe, would exhibit, in the distance, a great part of that mountainous or elevated range which runs along the south or right bank of the Cuma, as far upward as the eye can reach, sometimes approaching the stream, and sometimes receding from it, though its summit is generally parallel with the vale through which the river cuts its way for the sandy flats of the desert, where it is swallowed up or evaporated, without being permitted to do homage to the Caspian, by presenting, in token of allegiance, so much as a single draught of the waters which had washed the northern confines of Circassia.

When feasting my eyes with the scenery of the valley, and indulging such trains of thought as were naturally suggested by it, my attention was arrested by a new scene, which,

had my soul been inspired with the genuine enthusiasm of an antiquarian, would undoubtedly have induced me to lay an embargo on the arbatchi, till its pretensions had been examined, and its secret treasures in some measure explored. It was a large assemblage of beautiful green tumuli, many of them entire, others in a course of demolition, and a third class distinguished from the contiguous sward, merely by a green circular ring, which, when in their glory, had constituted their extensive base. Observing some men at work in one of them, on the south road, we leapt out of our arbas; and on reaching it, we found some men employed in digging up bricks. These, in the days of yore, had formed the walls of a house, which, after having been for centuries concealed from the eyes of mortals, was on the point of being razed to its foundation. Some of the bricks were of the same size and form with those in general use in Britain; of others the dimensions were different; forming a figure of about a foot square, the thickness of which, however, was much the same with the common ones. Made some enquiries respecting the tumuli, at the labourers employed in overturning them, and were told they were the remains of an ancient Tartar town; the buildings of which having been deserted and fallen into ruins, had, in process of time, been so enveloped in dust, as to assume the

form in which they now appear. One of them, on the north side of the road, stood pre-eminent amid the surrounding group. Probably it may have been a palace. And another hard by us on the south side of it, now nearly level with the ground, is supposed, by the natives, to have been a church, for this, among other reasons, that in digging up its foundations and ransacking its depositions, "dead men's bones" had been found among the ruins. On passing it, I observed, in the midst of its site, some large sand stones, which it is likely had made part of its foundation. By the time we had made these observations, the arbatchi had got considerably a-head of us, which suggested the propriety of making up the ground we had lost; in doing which, the tumuli skirting the desert, north of the road, came successively under my eye, serving as so many monitors of the vanity of all sublunary things. Happy they who search for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God!

Reached the village of Pokoina about ten, but observed nothing in it worthy of notice, except the polish and fancy colours of the bricks, of which several of its humble tenements are built. For these, however, its inhabitants are indebted to the skill and industry of former times, choosing rather to ransack the tumuli on the site of an ancient town, on a declivity a few versts up the river, than sub

ject themselves to the drudgery of making bricks on purpose. Having secured as many little necessaries as, it struck me, would supersede the necessity of making any purchases on Sabbath, and given the arbatchi a small sum for a fresh supply of oats to his horses, we continued our course up the valley, along a path, which, for the most part, was sheltered on both hands with reeds, or thickets of brushwood, till finding a suitable spot for preparing dinner, we halted and refreshed ourselves by a homely meal, thirty or forty yards from the banks of the river. After dinner, ascended the declivity for the tumuli, which I found to be scattered over a great extent of surface, serving to mark the site of a much larger town than that of the one passed in the morning. Passed a village named Majar, distinguished from the one of the same name already adverted to, by its situation on a rising ground about thirty versts farther up the river, and by its inhabitants, who are chiefly Armenians and Georgians. There is nothing remarkable in its appearance.

About five o'clock, observed, at a vast distance right before us, (our course about south west) something resembling the top of a conical hill, inclining gently to the south. It instantly struck me, it must be the summit of one of the mountains bordering on Caucasus. I pointed it out to John, who the moment it

met his eye, exclaimed, with a significant accent, *it is Beshtow.* Karass is just at the bottom of it, on this side. The sight of it gave new life to John, in whose mind it revived the grateful remembrance of the adjacent scenery, in the midst of which he passed his boyish days—and to me, as it served to shew the termination of my journey, and the abode of my missionary friends. So powerful was the impression, that I felt as if the journey had been brought to a close, and my friends ready to bid me welcome to Karass; forgetful that I was separated from the wished-for spot, by a distance little short of a hundred versts, and at all events of more than sixty miles. There were other circumstances, too, which contributed to the hearty welcome which I gave it, as it raised its head on the distant horizon. For example, I had seen nothing to be compared to it, since I took my leave of the mountains between Simborsk and Samara, more than two years ago; for though, when contrasted with the petty elevation in the Calmuc steppe, the elevated district which met the eye yesterday and this morning, south of the Cuma might figure as a mountain range, it bears a greater resemblance, in reality, to a stupendous sand bank, or some other kind of alluvial deposite, from which the waters of the ocean have receded, than to those mountain masses to which the name is usually given by

the geologists of Europe. Nor was this all: It had more the appearance of some insulated mountains, to which my eyes had been familiar, in Scotland, than any thing I had hitherto met with in Russia; sometimes bringing to mind the last sight I had of North-Berwick-Law, on bidding it adieu on the German ocean; at other times reviving the recollection of Ailsa Craig, as seen in the distant horizon from the western parts of Renfrewshire; the shape of its summit being something between the two, having less of the appearance of a sugar loaf than the former, and more of it than the latter. As we ascended the Cuma, the shoulders of Beshtow, which, when we first observed it, was sunk below our horizon, began to appear in sight, as did also a large mountain on the north of it, named Gielantow, not so elevated as the peak, but more massy, with the top of a conical rock on the south, separated from it by an interstice so admirably proportioned, as to leave an impression of its being a magnificent appendage to the mountain —in shape and figure something between a pyramid and an obelisk. By the time that these and several other mountain masses appeared fully in sight, Beshtow had too much of the aspect of Benlomond not to bring it before my imagination. Its shoulders are indeed less regularly formed, its summit less majestic, and its proportions, as a whole, less per-

fect; but with all these abatements, it has more of the aspect of that mountain, than any which I recollect of having seen; and were an Argyleshire highlander asked to give it a name in remembrance of his native country, I have little hesitation in predicting that it would be *Benlomond.*

Understood from John, that had the atmosphere been sufficiently clear, we might at this spot have had a view of Alburrows about 100 versts south of Beshtow, and the highest of the snow-covered mountains of Caucasus, to which the others we had been glancing at, may be considered as a kind of satellites; but being enveloped in the haze which overhang it, at the approach of night, I had not the pleasure of paying it the tribute of a distant admiring look, before descending once more from the declivity to the vale of the Cuma.

Reached the village of Maslacût, on the bank of the river, and were hospitably received by a brother-in-law of one of the deacons, who is himself a candidate for deacon's orders. His house, like those of the Russians in general, was well heated by a brick peach or stove, the warmth of which was the more agreeable that the evenings had begun to feel a little cold; but apprehensive that lodging this night in a comfortable room, might be nothing in my favour, in the prospect of lodging to-mor-

night in the kibitki, I preferred putting up with the accommodation I had been accustomed to in the steppe, and took up my quarters alone in the court yard; leaving it to John and the deacons to appropriate the comforts which the peach was calculated to afford them.

Oct. 17. On awaking in the course of the night, I found that the arba, which naturally turns on the axletree, as a lever on its fulcrum, had lost its balance so far in the wrong direction, that my feet had reached a point of elevation by no means intended for them when I retired to rest. To restore the arba to the position it had lost, nothing further was necessary than to move forward a little, which I had no sooner done, than the forepart of it, answering to the long arm of a certain kind of lever, instantly preponderated, and dropt to the wished-for level; and to prevent the recurrence of an incident which, though no serious inconvenience had disturbed my slumbers, I fixed it in such manner as, it struck me, would keep it from yielding to any accession of weight the other arm of the lever was likely to receive during the night; and having resumed my place in the kibitki, rested comfortably till the break of day.

Breakfasted with our landlord, and after thanking him for his hospitality, took our leave of him, and continued our course up the vale

of the Cuma. Passed Feodorifskie after mid-day, and having reached the village of Kasaisky, sixteen versts from Georghievsk, we took up our quarters for the night in the court-yard of one of the peasants.

In our progress up the Cuma, one of the most magnificent prospects opened on our view, that my eyes had ever witnessed in any country; the lofty mountains of Caucasus, covered with eternal snow, and towering above the adjacent mountains and hills, in an attitude which seemed to bespeak something analogous to a consciousness of the refulgent majesty in which they meet the eye, as they reflect the sun beams on the abodes of mortals, as well on the confines of the Calmuc steppe, as in the neighbouring valleys. The mountain which first appeared in sight, was the Alburrows; the snowy sides of which became visible about ten o'clock, through the interstices of the intervening clouds—in a manner which gave birth to emotions, which, though I shall long remember them, I despair of being able to describe. Its apparent elevation and magnitude, as seen through the broken clouds, so far exceeded my anticipations, great though they were, that I could scarcely believe my eyes, suspecting that, like those assemblages of clouds which had sometimes figured before us as mountains on our way to the Cuma, might turn out to be all an illusion. But my hesita-

tion was soon over; for John, to whom its shape and relative situation was familiar, having observed it, as he walked a little behind the arba, came running up to me, and pointing to the place, cried, yonder is Alburrows—do you see it, Sir? I looked again, my doubts vanished, and so powerful was the impression, on finding that, what I was tempted, from its size, to consider as a mighty assemblage of clouds, was actually a mountain, that I felt myself beginning to draw myself back in the kibitki, till, ashamed of my weakness in shrinking at the sight of a mountain a hundred miles distant, I snatched the reins from the hand of imagination, and made an effort to contemplate this part of the works of God with composure.* O Lord, how wonderful are thy

* Lest any of the missionary students, or others into whose hands this manuscript may fall, should feel disappointed on finding Alburrows appearing, perhaps, as much less than his anticipations, as it appeared, at first sight, to be greater than mine, I would beg leave to remark, that there are few things in which a traveller is more apt to be deceived, than in guessing at the probable height of mountains, &c. on a cursory view. I recollect that when descending the Volga, I once called out to my sister, "Come here, I see *Burnswark*," on perceiving what I supposed to be a mountain exactly resembling the top of it, just as I looked out of the cabin door. But on passing its base, a little farther down the river, it turned out to be a large sand hill. The deception had been occasioned by the nature of the ground and the distance; for when first seen beyond the intervening sands and bushes, it formed

works! in wisdom thou hast made them all. For an hour or two, Alburrows, with part of the contiguous range, was distinctly visible; after which it was again covered with clouds till the day was far spent. At length the distant horizon became perfectly clear, and exhibited to our wondering eyes a view of the whole midland range from Alburrows on the south-west of us, to the passes for Teflis on the south-east—at a time peculiarly favourable for devout reflection, just as the shadows of the evening were announcing the speedy approach of night, "when no man can work," and thus admonishing the sinful sons of Adam to prepare to meet their God. It was, moreover,

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much the same angle in the eye, that the top of Burnswark does, when seen beyond the intervening ridge from some parts of the firth of Solway. To give another example: A few days ago I took a ride with my brother Mr Galloway to Constantinagorskie. The ground was covered with snow, and on passing the height between Beshtow and the hot-water mountain, I observed a range of hills which I supposed were only a few versts distant, and was on the point of exclaiming, What hills are these? It is strange I never noticed them before! when a second look convinced me that what I took for *hills unnoticed before*, were, in fact, the mountains of Caucasus, which resumed their wonted apparent magnitude, as I began to reflect that the intervening distance, instead of being only eight or ten, was, in most places, upwards of 100 versts.

The same individual may be mistaken for a giant, when seen through a mist, and for a dwarf, when seen from the top of a steeple.

the evening of Sabbath ; a consideration which, I trust, had its influence in leading my thoughts from the fading glories of earth, splendid though some of them be, to the unfading glories of heaven—from the majesty of God, as discovered in the works of nature, to his infinite mercy and love in the economy of grace—and from the bustling scenes of this world, to the rest which remains for the people of God in that which is to come.

Oct. 18. Left Kasaisky about six. The morning, for about an hour or two, misty, which, of course, intercepted the view of distant scenery. Reached Under-podgorna, six versts from Georgievsk, about nine, and after taking our leave of the other deacon, who had halted there to enjoy the company of some friends connected with the hierarchy, forded the Cuma, which washed the bank on which the village stands, on the south, and continued our course direct for Georghievsk, the capital of the government of Caucasus ; the suburbs of which, we entered about eleven, and having secured convenient lodgings, got our goods unloaded, and made preparations for proceeding to the colony at an early hour to-morrow morning: the day being too far advanced to render it expedient to make the attempt sooner. Paid off the arbatchi by giving him what remained on hand of 200 rubles, the sum for

which he engaged to furnish his two arbas, with two horses each, to this place. Engaged three telegas from a Russian Tshooshtchik, for which he is tô receive eighteen rubles on setting us down safely in Karass to-morrow—being a distance of about thirty-five versts, or nearly twenty-four English miles.

Visited the city, which is situated on the brow of a steep bank or earthy precipice, the base of which is washed on the east by the Podcuma, which, from this place upward, is considered as the boundary between the Russian and Cabardian frontiers. The approach to it from the suburbs, is protected by a deep ditch overlooked by cannon and other martial engines, which give it an aspect sufficiently formidable to overawe even the hardy tenants of the rocks, on drawing near its environs. The dwelling houses, and other edifices within the ramparts, are, for the most part, government buildings, and although few would be considered as *elegant* in Moscow or St Petersburg, yet, when contrasted with the buildings in the adjacent villages, most of them are neat, and many of them handsome.

Understanding there was a large market or fair hard by the suburbs, which, after having continued some days, was on the point of breaking up, I repaired to the spot, and found that, though some bargains were still making, the merchants in general were employed in

packing their goods, in the view of proceeding to another market of the same kind, to be held in a few days at Stavropol. The supply of goods exceeded any thing I should have anticipated in this remote region; exhibiting a great variety of drapery, silks, crystal, china, and crokery ware, &c. &c.; many of them excellent, and almost all of them shewey in their kind.

After supper, the sight of a bedstead in a comfortable apartment, reminded me that the necessity of sleeping with my clothes on, as I was wont to do in the kibitki, was now superceded; and therefore laying aside the precautions I had found convenient in the desert, I prepared for retiring to rest, in a manner much more congenial to my early habits —thankful to the Father of mercies for his kind providence by the way, and for the goodness, temporal and spiritual, which he is at this moment making to pass before me.

Oct. 19. Though engaged to be on the spot by day-break, the Russian Tshooshtchik did not make his appearance till the sun was up; and before all was packed and ready for the road, it was nearly eight o'clock.

On taking leave of our landlord, who is a German, I was invited to make his house my home; whenever I had occasion to visit the

town—an offer for which I thanked him, and having bidden him adieu, set off for the colony in the hope of reaching it at an early hour in the afternoon.

Passed a village named Babuk, five or six versts from Georghievsk, which I understand is inhabited by Abazas and Cabardians. It is a village of considerable extent and population; and being under the protection of the Russian government, it struck me, it might be an excellent station for some of our young missionaries to settle in for a time, in the view of acquiring the knowledge of the Cabardian language, and there preparing themselves for itinerating among that people, in the land of their fathers' sepulchres, between the present frontiers and the snow-mountains, should external circumstances in the course of a few years render it practicable to do so in safety; and judging from certain movements which it is unnecessary to describe, such an event is not at all improbable.

About mid-day, came close to the right bank of the Podcuma, which at this place is precipitous, the soil of the contiguous rising ground having been here and there scooped out by the waters as they cut their way by a circuitous course through a narrow vale, bounded on the other side by the base of Berelik, a considerable mountain whose shape

bespoke it to be a secondary formation, though no strata were visible to confirm the hypothesis. After passing a cardon, or out-post of Cozaks, we left the river on our left, and ascended a rising ground for an elevated range, the surface of which, for many versts, is nearly level, situated between the Podcuma and the Jamucha, a river which waters the vale of Karass east of the colony, and falls into the Cuma below Naiman village. In our progress along this elevated tract, with Beshtow right before us, Gilantow on the one hand, and the hot-water mountain on the other, we found ourselves in the centre of a delightful semicircular range; the summit of which was set off by the diversified figures of the mountains; in contemplating which, the eye was relieved by the scenery on the sides of an elevated ridge by which they were connected. The rock, which on Saturday struck the eye as the top of an obelisk or pyramid, immediately in advance of Gilantow, I now found to be united to another rock, which, at that time, was not sufficiently elevated to strike the eye; and its appearance, as a whole, was so modified, that I was as much indebted to its position, as to its shape, for being able to recognize it as the same. Between this rock and Beshtow, there is still another hill, covered with wood to the top,

which approaches nearer to the figure of a perfect cone, than any in the range, and is remarkable, besides, for a far-famed mineral spring, which is said to be strongly impregnated with iron. The hot-water mountain—still more famous for the hot mineral springs which issue from one of its appendages—yields to none in the range for beauty, though, as might be expected from its being of a secondary formation, it has less of the sublime than some of the others, which, judging from a distant view, are composed chiefly of primitive rocks.

Beshtow, which occupies a central position in the same circular range, still retained an imperfect resemblance of Benlomond, on a general view of its figure; but there is one thing, in particular, in Beshtow, to which I am not aware that there is a parallel in the other—it is covered with wood nearly to its summit, and on one of its shoulders the tops of the trees are to be seen here and there from top to bottom, in the openings of a ragged rock, or natural dyke, which forms a kind of profile of that part of the mountain, when, as was the case with us, it lies between the eye of the beholder and the western horizon.

A little before three o'clock, the colony appeared in sight, right before us, beau-

tifully situated on a gentle declivity, apparently a verst or two from the bottom of the mountain, and at the eastern extremity of the forest. The circumstance that struck me most forcibly, when the village was pointed out to me by John and Thomas Steel, who had met us in our progress from the Cardon, was its size; for though I knew that besides the missionaries there were a number of Germans in the place, and that it was guarded by a company of soldiers, and a party of Cozaks; for all which I should also have known, that lodgings would be necessary, yet I had in imagination figured to myself a small village, consisting of a dozen or twenty houses, for the accommodation of the missionaries and a few other families, without making due allowance for the whole number, or for the manner in which their houses and court-yards are constructed.

Having viewed the village from the adjacent height east of the Jamucha, we descended a winding path for the valley; and just as we had crossed the rivulet by which it is watered, John recognised my brother Mr Galloway, at the distance of about a gun-shot, on his way from the village to meet us. Being well mounted, he reached us in a few seconds, and gave me a most cordial welcome, as a brother missionary and fellow-labourer in the work of the Lord. Fourteen years had now

elapsed since the reinforcement of the missionaries had reached the colony, and the arrival of a new one served to revive the remembrance of former times, and to encourage the hope that he and Mr Paterson, who, I was sorry to hear, was still poorly, would have not only the prayers, but the personal co-operation of others in their endeavours to cultivate the missionary field entrusted to their care on the northern confines of Caucasus. There were other considerations, too, which it is unnecessary to particularise, which made the interview mutually agreeable, and having seated ourselves together in the telega, while John took charge of the horse, we ascended a a rising ground, from the rivulet to the village, with cheerful hearts, conversing about the concerns of the mission and the missionary settlement, till having past the centinal at the eastern gate, and the guard at the cannon, in the midst of the village, we reached the mission house, when a new impulse was given to my feelings by the congratulations of Mrs Galloway, and other friends that had collected about the gate to welcome the stranger.

Accompanied by Mr Galloway, called on my brother Mr Paterson, who, on hearing I was arrived, stepped out of his bed-room into the parlour, and, with a smiling though sickly countenance, welcomed me to the colony. In a few minutes I had the pleasure of being

introduced to Mrs Paterson, who lost no time in ordering a cup of coffee to be got ready for the refreshment of their new missionary guest, which was no unwelcome beverage after travelling in the heat of the day, from Georghievsk to the colony. Mr Paterson's spirits revived as the conversation went on, and in the course of an hour or two, he had almost forgotten that he was indisposed.

Meanwhile the hour of public prayer drew near, and having repaired to the place where prayer is wont to be made, we offered up our evening sacrifice to the God whom we serve, in the hope of meeting with acceptance for the sake of Him that loved us, and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour. After which we took our leave of each other for a season, and retired to our respective apartments, much refreshed by our interview, and thankful to our heavenly Father for the tender mercies with which he had crowned us.

GENERAL REMARKS

RESPECTING

The History, Climate, &c. &c.

OF THE

SCOTCH COLONY AT KARASS.

During the few weeks I have been in the colony, frequent opportunities have occurred of receiving from my brethren, a great many notices respecting the history of the settle ment, as well as of making observations on the climate of the country, the nature of the soil, and other particulars of a similar complexion. On these points, however, the Directors are already in possession of ample means of information, in the reports transmitted from time to time by the missionaries; which supersedes the necessity of entering into the minute details that might otherwise be desirable; and I shall therefore content myself with offering a few cursory remarks.

Soon after my arrival at the colony, I was accompanied by my brethren to the burial ground; the sight of which, in connection with the questions put to them by a fellow-labourer who had come to winter among them, gave rise, I have no doubt, to a variety of painful recollections on their part; while its language to me, and, indeed, to all of us, was "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." It is situated on a small oblong hill or ridge, the base of which is of an oval form, terminating on the east by a gentle slope, and on the west by a pretty steep declivity. Its elevation above the contiguous soil, may be from thirty to forty feet on the south, and from fifty to sixty on the north. Its distance, north of the village, may be half a verst. Here lies the mortal part of the Rev. Henry Brunton, a man of a most vigorous understanding, well skilled in the sacred literature of Europe, extensively acquainted with the dogmas of the Mohammedans, whose Coran he could read in the original Arabic; endowed with a singular capacity for acquiring a knowledge of dead and living languages, of a shrewd, active, enterprising turn of mind, and by consequence (in as far as natural capacity and extensive erudition are concerned) eminently qualified for the work of a

christian missionary. He died on the 27th March 1813, after having finished the translation of the Tartar-Turkish New Testament, now in circulation among Tartars, &c. on both sides of the Russian lines—a work that may be considered as a kind of standard or model for those who wish to write agreeably to the Turkish grammar, yet in such a style as to be understood by Tartars possessed of a moderate knowledge of their own language. Besides Mr Brunton, and his sister Mr Paterson's first wife, and the first wife of Mr Galloway, the remembrance of whom could not fail to produce a variety of mingled emotions in the hearts of my companions, the following members of the missionary family, exclusive of children, are interred in the same ground; viz. Mr Douglas Cousin, surgeon, Mr and Mrs Hardie, Mr Andrew Hay, Mrs Cairns, and Mrs Brunton, with Amelia, first wife of Mr Macalpine, and Jean, Mr Fraser's first wife. Of these, the greater part died in the years 1804—5, partly of diseases occasioned by the hardships they endured when the mission was in its infancy, but chiefly, it is presumed, of the dysentery, or the dregs of it —a disease with which most of the missionaries were seized, in consequence of having unwittingly taken up their abode in a house in the wooden walls of which the infectious matter had been concealed. The mention of this

circumstance, in connection with the remarks made on the history of the settlement by my brethren, served to correct an erroneous notion which I had formed of the climate of Karass, which I had been in the habit of considering as very unhealthy. The fact seems to be directly the reverse, if an inference may be drawn from a list of the births and deaths which have taken place in the colony since the arrival of the Germans in the year 1810, or from the healthy looks of the greater part of the population. The prevailing disease is the ague, which is often very severe in the sultry months of July and August, and the dregs of it often issue in dropsies, &c. but consumptions, and other diseases prevalent in Britain, are comparatively little known in the colony or its vicinity. In the year 1804, the plague committed dreadful ravages in the immediate vicinity of the colony, and still it frequently makes its appearance beyond the Cuban; but I understand it is not by any means a disease to which this quarter is peculiarly liable, as the late pestilence is the only one that has been known here in the memory of man. It is a circumstance that will long be remembered with gratitude by the missionaries, that, when surrounded by the plague to which thousands of the natives became victims, not one of their number fell. Sultan Kate-Gherry, then under their care, was, indeed,

seized by it, but was mercifully preserved, and preserved, I hope, to be a blessing to his countrymen. Nay, in the adorable providence of Him who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, the plague seemed to have proved their salvation from captivity; for when the army from beyond the Cuban came to the very borders of their land, and set fire to several villages a few versts distant, they were deterred, it has been supposed, from proceeding to the villages then on the lands of Karass, by the dread of that scourge of mankind. Is it enthusiastic or unreasonable, then, to hope that a mission, for the preservation of which the God of heaven has wrought such wonderful deliverances, may yet be honoured by Him in planting the banner of the cross in the hitherto inaccessible retreats of Mohammedan delusion, or in lighting afresh the lamp of the gospel, in quarters where, from the want of oil, it "has gone out?"

The soil of the lands of the colony and neighbourhood, is a rich black loam, which, when well cultivated, is remarkably productive in all kinds of grain, though, as the Germans find the culture of tobacco, potatoes, &c. more profitable, the portion of land appropriated to the raising of corn, is but small. As a whole, the colonial lands are exceedingly well watered with a great many excellent springs, not to speak of several rivulets which wind their way

from the mountains to the Jamucha, and thence by Naiman village to the Cuma. Mr Paterson has a charming orchard; besides which, and that of Mr Galloway, which, though not so far advanced, is thriving well, there are several others in the village, one of which, in particular, is so extensive and productive, as to constitute the principal support of its proprietor and family. Great quantities of first-rate cabbages, too, are raised by the Germans, which, when taken to the market in Georghievsk, or to the village at the hot-water springs, bring a high price, being esteemed the best in the whole country. The remark is equally applicable to the potatoes raised in the colony, which are of a superior quality to any that I have met with in Russia. The quantity of arable land lately measured off for it by order of Government, is 2500 dessatines, which, allowing three acres to a dessatine, is upwards of 7000 acres, exclusive of nearly 1000 dessatines, overgrown with reeds, brushwood, &c. which in Scotland would soon be, almost all of it, compelled to yield to the plough. The whole of the lands are very productive in natural grass, which grows up to a great height, with a luxuriance unknown in Britain. In the winter, or more generally in spring, they set fire to the long grass that has not been cut down in hay time. I have already seen one or two spectacles of the kind,

at a distance, which, during night, reminded me of the reflection on the atmosphere of the furnaces at Clyde or Carron iron works. In spring, I am told, the whole horizon is sometimes in a blaze from the burning of the withered grass. This operation makes the next crop more tender, and the climate more healthy, than if the grass and weeds were allowed to lie and rot on the surface of the earth. With the exception of gardens attached to the houses in the village, there is not an inclosure in the whole colony; and if the exception be extended to sheep-cotes, &c. the remark applies to the whole tract of country between Caucasus and the Volga.

The temperature of the atmosphere is, in general, much more equable than at Astrachan. The thermometer does not rise so high in summer, nor does it sink so low in winter; and, which at first sight may seem strange, the temperature is still more equable in the valleys of the snow mountains. Last winter, when the thermometer sunk to 17° of Raumur in the colony, the rivulets among the mountains were not frozen, and the valleys were green all the winter over. The summer heats, too, are less oppressive. In short, from all accounts, the climate in these valleys differs not materially from that of the valleys among the hills in our native country. The most striking characteristic of a Karass winter, as it set

in about the beginning of December, was a strong hoar frost, which lodged on the branches of the trees, in the form of minute icicles, in such quantities as to weigh them to the ground, or break them during the process. Its appearance is picturesque and romantic in a high degree, but its effects, particularly in the orchards, destructive. Nor are large trees proof against its overwhelming power. I have seen the massy branches of some of them break down with a crash, in a dead calm, merely by the weight of the rime or hoar frost. When the rime is strong, the whole country is overhung sometimes for many successive days by a thick fog. But no sooner does the fog begin to be dispersed by the beams of the sun, than the minute icicles gradually lose their hold, and drop to the ground, when the unbroken branches resume their former position.

The village of Karass, the seat of the colony, is situated about forty versts west of the confluence of the Cuma and Podcuma, and thirty-five versts from Georghievsk, the government town and capital of the province. From the former of these rivers below Naiman village, it is distant ten or twelve versts, and from the latter, opposite Berelik, about nine. Its distance from the bottom of Beshtow is estimated at three versts, and, following the circuitous path which it is convenient to take in ascending the mountain, it will be

nearly as many more to its summit. The principal street in the village is nearly a verst in length, from east to west, and is crossed at right angles, by another street, near the middle of it. The high street is watered from end to end by a rivulet, which, though useful, cannot, in its present form, be considered as ornamental. At a small expence, however, a double row of trees might be planted on either side of it; and as the street is spacious, room would still be left for a road between the trees and the houses; in which case, the appearance of the whole would, on a cursory view, bear a resemblance to the shady walks with which some of the streets in St Petersburg are adorned. The dwelling houses and other buildings are of wood, a few old ones excepted, which are of wattles. Of these the mission-house is in all respects the best; though in a respectable country town or village in our native country, it would of course figure in a subordinate rank.

In all civil causes, the colony is governed by its own laws; but in criminal cases it is subject to the general laws of the empire, or, to speak more properly, to Russian courts of justice. The chief court in the colony is the missionary committee, in subordination to which is the *unter geright*, or under court, which is composed of three of the Germans. Hitherto the Germans have had no native pastor; but

one of their own number, a teacher, reads a discourse to them on Sabbath, and the ordinance of baptism is dispensed to their children by Mr Paterson.

Judging from the progress made by the Germans since their arrival here, Karass is a favourable situation for farmers and others who live by cultivating the ground; for such of them as have from that time been all along resident in the village, are very much improved in their circumstances, while those who left it some years ago, in the hope of being better elsewhere, have lately returned, all or most of them very much reduced. Were it the primary object of the Society to raise a flourishing colony, it might, with a few Scotch farmers,* &c. a few thousands to begin improvements, and suitable regulations for the management of its internal economy, be brought in a short time to a pitch of respectability which would be highly honourable to our country, and serve to give the crowds of nobility who, in the summer months, flock to the hot waters, some idea of what might be accomplished by the perseverance and industry of Britons. In the course of twenty years, it would in all probability repay the costs with interest. But as the expence would in the first instance be considerable, and the success, like that of all spe-

* The Germans, with the exception of a few families, are ordered to leave the colony and settle elsewhere.

culations, problematical, it would perhaps be improper for me to recommend, or for the Directors to attempt raising it to this imaginary point of elevation, unless a few public-spirited individuals were generously to run the risk, and in the mean time allow the liberality of the Christian public at large, to run in the channel marked out for it by the laws and regulations of the Society.

There is one thing, however, in recommending which to the attention of the Directors, I feel more at liberty, viz. to follow out and improve upon the laudable exertions of the present incumbents, to raise the colony to such a degree of respectability, as might serve to evidence their gratitude to the Russian government for the valuable privileges attached to the lands, and for the very particular interest His Imperial Majesty has taken in our concerns; especially as by so doing they would contribute essentially to the prosperity of the mission. Hitherto the attention of the missionaries has of necessity been divided, between the management of the civil concerns of the colony and providing for their families on the one hand, and the prosecution of the still more important objects they had in view in leaving their native country on the other. Now, from their intimate acquaintance with the Tartar language, their knowledge of the modes of thinking prevalent among the natives, and their

long experience, they are much better qualified for taking the lead in missionary work, than young men of equal abilities, with a first rate classical education, could be for several years to come; and it strikes me, "it is not reason that they should leave the word of God and serve tables." The details of the civil concerns of the colony should, with all convenient speed, be transferred to others, and arrangements made for enabling them to direct nearly their whole attention to the "wisdom of winning souls;" without being called upon to interfere with civil concerns, farther than to see, at stated times, "that all things were done decently and in order" by the subordinate office-bearers of the colony. It is true, a plan of this kind could not be carried into effect in a day; but arrangements might be adopted, which, by the blessing of God, might lead to the attainment of the object proposed by it, in a few years; whereas if nothing be done, matters must of course continue to move on in much the same involved style as formerly.

Should the following hints be of any use, considered as a kind of general sketch, to be modified according to circumstances, they are at your service.

The colony should henceforth be made to do something for its own support; and for this

purpose taxes should be imposed accordingly on the occupiers of houses and lands. For the administration of justice, there should be two courts,* the one supreme and the other subordinate. In each of these there should be a Justice, a clerk, and an officer—to be chosen annually. The subordinate court should meet once a-week, the supreme court once a-month. Both of them should have power to hold adjourned meetings when necessary, it being understood, however, that new causes should not be received except on the regular days.

The office-bearers in both courts should have small salaries, sufficient, on a moderate calculation, to indemnify them for their professional skill, and the loss of time occasioned by the discharge of the duties of their office. Should a person feel aggrieved with the sentence pronounced by the subordinate court, he should, under certain restrictions, have power to appeal to the superior court.

The object to be gained by a subordinate court in such a small settlement, is to relieve the missionaries from the details of lawsuits, by providing that all causes (those excepted which concern the missionary families) should

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* This particular is merely an attempt at improving upon the principles already adopted and acted upon by the Committee.

be taken up by a court composed of the inhabitants, whose interest it would be to settle their own affairs. The object to be gained by having a superior court, is to make the subordinate one more circumspect and vigilant, from the knowledge that their sentence is liable to a review, and to provide that nothing be done to pervert the colonial charter, or in opposition to the acknowledged principles of justice.

To prevent the subordinate court from being troubled with frivolous lawsuits, and the supreme court from being pestered with irrelevant appeals, it might be proper either to enforce the use of stamped paper, or the payment of a small sum as clerk's dues.

Provision should also be made by the colony for the support of gospel ordinances and the education of the children. For this purpose there should be a colonial pastor, on whom, in particular, it should devolve to administer ordinances within the colony; though, till such time as the colony become sufficiently large to require his whole attention, he might occasionally visit the villages bordering on our lands. Two teachers would be necessary, the one for English and Tartar, the other for German and Russ. Each of the teachers should have a small salary from the colony, which, with the wages received by the latter from the Germans, and the emoluments received by the former for assisting the missionaries, might prove a com-

petency. The same remark will apply to the salary of the colonial pastor.

In addition to the above office-bearers, it would be necessary to have a treasurer and a land-measurer.

Supposing a modification of this plan to be adopted, two distinct cash-accounts should be kept, the one for the colony, the other for the missionaries.

As for the salaries to be given to the civil office-bearers of the colony, I am not prepared to speak particularly. With respect to those of the missionaries, however, whether colonial or itinerant, I have no hesitation in saying, that if they are to give their whole attention to missionary work, their salaries should, with some trifling modification, be the same with those of their brethren in the other settlements; the amount of which is of course known to the Directors; for though they might support themselves in part, as they have hitherto done, by the produce of the land, the attention necessary to secular affairs, in looking after servants, &c. &c. will encroach upon the time which might otherwise be devoted to the mission, in perhaps a greater ratio than the saving of expence occasioned by their doing so. One missionary, with a salary sufficient to keep his family independently of the land, might do as much missionary work as it is practicable for two or three to do on the present plan.—Cloth-

ing is dearer here than at Astrachan; a circumstance, I presume, which will nearly balance the saving in the comparative price of victuals in the market here or in the town of Georghievsk. The whole difference indeed seems to resolve itself into that which may be supposed to obtain between the dress and style of living among persons of the same rank in the town and country respectively, or to use *professional language*, the difference between a town and country clergyman.

Supposing an attempt were made to enable the missionaries here to give their whole attention to missionary work, there is still another office which it strikes me that it would be necessary to institute, viz. that of *missionary steward*, whose business it should be to raise upon the land, in the capacity of a superintending farmer or gardener, or to procure in the market a supply of necessaries, which might serve as a kind of magazine from which the missionaries could each of them be supplied with what was requisite for his family, without being under the necessity of riding seventy versts every few weeks to and from Georghievsk. Could a person be found possessed of a small capital, and willing to run the risk, he might have land, &c. assigned him on easy terms, on condition he made it his business to have a supply of the usual necessaries of life on hand, for the use of the missionary families,

particularly when the brethren were itinerating; and in this case no additional demands would be made on the Society's funds on his account; while it would tend very much to disentangle the missionaries from the affairs of this world.

Is there no friend of the Lord Jesus in Scotland, prepared to offer his services in this work? If there be, he might render an important service to the mission, and I am persuaded without being a loser in his temporal concerns.

Wednesday, 20th October. Was visited by Shorah, a Cabardian Wyden, of whom I understand mention has been made oftener than once, by my brethren, in their communications to the Directors. He had just returned from the Carachai country, situated at the bottom of Alburrows, whose lofty summit had opened on my view in my progress up the vale of the Cuma; and as I naturally felt my curiosity awakened by the presence of one who had so lately touched the approach to its eternal snows, I made some general enquiries respecting it, before proceeding to converse with him on his views of the Christian system.

He told us, that the top of the mountain was considered as absolutely inaccessible. Around the bottom of the snow line, there is constantly a strong wind, before which the snow is drifted about in such a manner, as of itself to present almost an insuperable difficulty in the way of adventurers who might be daring enough to make the attempt. Above the snow line, the surface is rendered extremely rugged and dangerous, sometimes by tremendous fissures in the frozen snow, at other times by huge masses of it which, tumbling down from the superior regions, in large icy fragments,

present a barrier too formidable to be surmounted. The rocks in that quarter, he told us, were quite of a different appearance from the rocks in this country, being distinguished by a metallic lustre, which serves to confirm the natives in their opinion that they are blended with the precious metals, for which reason they are extremely jealous if they observe strangers picking up any fragments of them, lest they be tempted to make inroads upon the country for the sake of its hidden treasures. He had succeeded in securing a few small fragments, which he promised to shew me afterwards, but durst not attempt bringing large specimens, lest he should be detected.

The distance from this to Alburrows, he told us, was about three days' journey. It might be approached in safety, he thought, even by Europeans, by adopting proper precautions—travelling in the dress of the natives, for example, and placing themselves under the protection of some powerful chief, whose name would be respected. The natives, named the Carachais, are Mohammedans: their language is a dialect of the Tartar, interspersed with a number of words not in use upon the lines, though the number of such words is not so great as to occasion any great difficulty in conversing with them. They knew of the existence of the missionary establishment here, but when he left that country, the chief thing of

a religious nature that occupied their attention, as well as that of the Cabardians and Mohammedans on the lines, was a kind of circular letter from Mecca, warning all good mussulmans that the day of judgment was at hand, and solemnly exhorting them to repentance. He had a copy of the circular along with him, written in Turkish, which he read and explained to Mr Galloway, who, as interpreter, told me the substance of it in English. It contains a pretty faithful picture of the sins prevalent among the Mohammedans of the present day, with a solemn admonition to repentance; but, as a whole, is one of the most glaring impositions ever practised on the credulity of the ignorant, and absolutely below contempt, were it not that the interest which the ringleaders of Islamism take in promoting its circulation, serves to shew the idea which they have formed of the blindness of the common people, while the credit it met with, and the alarm it is said to have excited, go far to prove that their ideas on this point are not far from being correct. Among other methods prescribed for escaping the wrath to come, the following is worthy of notice;—paying fifty copeiks to a writer for transcribing a copy of the circular for the use of the faithful. Of this part of it Shora himself seemed to be ashamed. —Having disposed of preliminary topics, Mr Galloway asked him whether he had been read-

ing the New Testament he had received from the missionaries, and how he liked it? In reply, he had no faults to find with the morality of the gospels; but he could not believe that Jesus was the Son of God. It was impossible in the nature of things that it could be so. How could God have a son! The idea he could not comprehend; the doctrine he could not receive. After directing his attention to what the Scriptures teach respecting the constitution of our Saviour's person, as being "Immanuel, God with us," we told him, that though we firmly believed the union of the divine and human nature in the person of Christ, on the authority of God's own word, we did not profess to comprehend the nature of the union, nor pretend to explain it; adding at the same time, that the incomprehensibility of the doctrine furnished no more reason for refusing to embrace it, when plainly revealed, than our inability to comprehend the nature of the union of soul and body, did for denying the obvious fact, that the body which we know to be a material substance is animated by a spiritual substance named the soul. He answered, This does not apply to the case in hand. Man, from his nature, is a changeable being, but God unchangeable; and if Christ had been God by nature, he never could have become man, because this implies mutability; according to this doctrine, his nature must have undergone a

change when he became man. To obviate this objection, we told him, that though his assumption of human nature did imply the commencement of a new relation, which had no existence before, it did not imply, nor was it necessary it should imply, any change in his Divine nature. In illustration of this, we remarked, there was a time when there was no world. This he admitted, as also that God made the world and all which it contains, without sustaining any change in his nature. Here, then, we told him, is the case of the commencement of a relation which had no existence till the world was made; yet the Divine nature continued, and does continue, the same No change of nature is implied: and neither is a change of nature implied in Christ's taking a human body and soul into union with his Divine person. Such reasonings, he rejoined, may satisfy Christians, who have been accustomed to hear them from infancy, and to whom a belief in this doctrine is a kind of second nature; but could never satisfy Mohammedans, who believe that *God is one*, and that he is eternally and unchangeably the same. We told him that there was one way in which even he might satisfy himself of the truth of the doctrine of the Bible respecting the character of the Messiah, and that Christ himself had pointed it out; "If any man will do his will, the same shall know of the doctrine, whether

it be of God or whether I speak of myself." In illustration of this interesting and highly encouraging promise (for such it must be to the humble inquirer), we recommended walking in the way which Messiah had pointed out, by reading in the scriptures of truth, the testimony which God hath given concerning his Son, by ordering his conversation accordingly, and praying the Father of mercies to guide him into the knowledge of the truth for the sake of *Him* who is the only Mediator between God and man. When about to offer some additional remarks of a hortatory nature, a circumstance occurred which interrupted the conversation, and the prosecution of the discussion was of course put off till a more convenient season. May the Lord grant that this man, who I am informed has heard much of the Christian system, and knows more of it than perhaps any of his countrymen, may be preserved from sacrificing truth at the shrine of worldly interest, and be taught to search for "the wisdom that cometh down from above," as for hid treasures, knowing that "the merchandise thereof is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than that of fine gold."

22d, Visited the hot water springs, accompanied by my brethren Messrs Paterson and Galloway, under the protection of a Cozak. They are about seven versts from the colony, and

issue from an elevated ridge attached to the mountain on the south, having the Podcuma on the right, and a narrow vale on the left, as it is approached from its south-western extremity. From this point we ascended a flight of stairs, sheltered from the weather by a canopy, and ornamented on both hands with railing. At the top of the ascent is an elegant public building, nearly finished, intended for a new bath-house; the apartments of which we were permitted to visit by the sentinel on guard, and were much pleased with their appearance—the bathing rooms, sweating rooms, with all the dependences, being laid off in a style that left the mind impressed with a high idea of the professional skill of the architect by whom it was contrived, and with no mean idea of the mechanics by whom it has been executed. The building itself is of wood; the baths are cut out of the solid rock. A few yards farther up the ridge, stands the old bath-house, which, though inferior to its new neighbour, is neat and commodious. The hotwaters are brought from two or three contiguous springs, and introduced into the baths by a pipe of an inch and a half or two inches in diameter. Their temperature, as ascertained by a thermometer Mr Paterson had brought along with him, is 33° of Reaumur. Proceeded along the ridge, the ascent of which from the bath-house to its north-western extremity is somewhat

less, it struck me, than that of the ridge on which the old town of Edinburgh is built; a ridge to which, when in its natural state, it would certainly, on a cursory view, bear a pretty strong resemblance, were there any thing connected with it corresponding to the castle rock. The phenomena observable, as we advanced, however, were quite its own; and soon came to be more closely allied in imagination, with the descriptions given by my friend Dr Henderson of the scenes he had witnessed in Iceland, than with any thing that had come under my own personal observation. The hot-waters naturally suggested the idea of a subterraneous fire, or of a chemical process on a large scale, to which they are indebted for their mineral qualities and their temperature; and a chasm in the ridge nearly right along its summit, serving as a conductor to part of them in their progress to the bath, no less naturally suggested the probability of its having once been shaken to its foundations by an earthquake. This idea is corroborated by the well known fact, that after a slight earthquake which happened a few years ago (1812), the principal springs ceased for a time to emit their waters, though they afterwards reappeared to the no small joy of those who had been accustomed to repair to them for their medicinal virtues. In our progress, the chasm was, in some places, open to a considerable depth,

in others it was covered with rocks, under which it formed a subterraneous cavern. Sometimes it was only a few inches wide, at other times as many feet or yards.

On descending into one of the caverns in quest of the waters which, it struck us, might be found among the loose stones at the bottom, we observed a beautiful bird, in which, judging from its fresh appearance, the spark of life had just become extinct. Mr Galloway, who stept into a hollow on the left a little behind me, suddenly exclaimed, surely there is bad air in this cave, I feel it cutting my breath and affecting my head. He instantly came out of the hollow, and on turning round, I stooped down to feel the air, and, in a moment, was sensible of an affection similar to what he remarked, and which ceased when we stood upright on the edge of it. The rock appeared to be a kind of limestone; and suspecting that a quantity of carbonic acid gas might have escaped from it, I desisted from exploring it farther, lest, when gratifying my curiosity, I should share the fate of the poor bird, which, it instantly struck me, had most probably dropt to the bottom in attempting to escape out of the cave where it felt itself affected by the gas. I mentioned my suspicions to my friends; and as there was little to be gained by penetrating into its recesses, we walked along the right side of the chasm, till we reached

three contiguous fountains, all of them boiling like so many caldrons—situated a few yards from the chasm in an oblong square of not more than twenty yards by six, and distinguishable, each of them, from its fellows, by the colour and temperature of its waters. The first we came to, was clear as chrystal, at a temperature of thirty-one of Reaumur. The temperature of the second one, which was separated from the first by a partition rock of about a foot and a half in thickness, was only nineteen, and its waters of a milky colour; the shade of which was heightened by a tincture of blue. In the third fountain, separated from the middle one by a thin rock, the thermometer sunk to about ten. Its colour resembled that of its nearest neighbour, but not so closely as to occasion any difficulty in recognizing a characteristic difference. When the hand was dipt in the cold fountain, the waters of that next to it felt warm, but when the order was inverted, and the hand plunged first into the chrystal fountain, the middle one seemed coldish. After repeating our observations on these interesting fountains, with which all of us were struck, (as my friends had not till then examined them particularly) we proceeded a little farther up the ridge, and observed several other springs of different temperatures, all of them near the chasm, and watering the side of the mountain in their progress to the

Podcuma. I was told that about half a verst farther up, there is a pit, on descending which, the hot-water springs may be recognised on their way from some great subterraneous reservoir to the bath-house; but as our brother Mr Paterson, though much better than when I reached the colony, was not sufficiently recovered to render it advisable for him to go so far, we crossed the ridge, and returned by the narrow vale to our kibitki, which was left at the bottom of the stairs. In passing, we observed some specimens of limestone which had been brought from the adjacent mountain; the strata of which, as to be seen in the quarry, it was not convenient for me to examine. Before ascending the stairs, we had another opportunity of observing the hot waters in their descent to the valley, over the rocky declivity of the ridge; their course being marked by the vapours arising from them, and by the fresh green colour imparted to the grass with which it was lined. Here the chemical mineralogist might amuse himself by observing the thin strata of chalk tuff in a course of formation from the lime held in solution by the hot waters, and the carbonic acid gas of the atmosphere, with which it comes into contact in its process down the ridge. And, indeed, the whole of its south-western extremity seems to consist of tuff formed in this manner, in the course of successive genera-

tions. It is nearly as white as chalk, and is often used as a white wash, as well for the cottages of the peasants, as for buildings of higher pretensions. Having finished our excursion along the ridge, Mr Paterson and I partook of the hot bath, and after reclining in the sweating house, wrapt up, as the custom is, in a shube, till we had become sufficiently cool to venture into the open air, we prepared for retracing our steps. The village in the contiguous valley was right before us as we took our seats in the kibitki; but the nobility and gentry who frequent the waters during summer, having withdrawn, it was, like Goldsmith's village, in a manner deserted, though the habitations of its late tenants, being most of them new, remain entire, and are ready for a fresh supply of visitants on the return of the season. Reached the colony in safety, highly gratified with our trip to the waters and the scenery which presented itself to our view during the excursion.

Oct. 24. Delivered a discourse in English, the substance of which was afterwards repeated by Mr Galloway in Tartar, for the benefit of such of the hearers as understood the English language but imperfectly. In this part of the service, I went over the discourse, pausing at the end of each sentence, till Mr Galloway had given the interpretation, and it

struck me, in going on, that in addressing rude and illiterate hearers, speaking by an interpreter, possesses advantages, which, in a good measure, counterbalance the inconveniencies that might be anticipated from its necessarily interrupting the teacher, and thus checking the free interest which might otherwise be excited as he proceeded—and from its presenting the truth to the hearers in detached parcels. For example, the hearers have a little time to think of what the interpreter has told them, while a new sentence is giving out by the preacher; and as one is under the necessity of using great plainness of speech, and of avoiding long rounded periods, the style of course approaches nearer to that of common conversation, than it would otherwise do, and is better understood. I could also perceive, at times, an eagerness in the looks of my little audience, when giving out a new sentence, the meaning of which seemed to be —what more has the preacher got to say? let us hear it: for which purpose, the moment I paused, their eyes were turned to Mr Galloway for the interpretation.

In the afternoon, Mr Paterson delivered a discourse in Tartar, and, during the evening, some portions of scripture were read, in that language, by the ransomed boys, on which I made it my business to offer suitable remarks. O that the Spirit of the Lord may give effect

to his own word, and render it the savour of life unto life, unto all who have this day heard the joyful sound.

Oct. 25. Mr Galloway having signified his willingness to accompany me to Naiman village, and act as my interpreter in speaking to the Mohammedans respecting the gospel salvation, I cordially accepted the offer; being encouraged by what I had seen yesterday, to commence itinerating among the natives immediately. Reached the village (five versts from the colony) in about an hour, riding at an easy pace, and conversing with Mr Galloway and two of the ransomed, on such topics as naturally occurred. Called on the Mirza, or chief of the village, and on being introduced to him in his conack house, as an effendi from Astrachan, was instantly invited to take a seat along with his highness, on a kind of cushion or bed, which was separated from the floor by a mat, the whole serving instead of an European sofa. Conversed with him, in the first instance, on general subjects, with a view to prepare the way for calling his attention to the one thing needful. In the course of a few minutes, however, dinner was served up, of which we were invited to partake. It consisted of eight or ten small joints of meat, lining the margin of a circular wooden tray, in broad Scotch, *a stool*, of from two to three feet in

diameter—each joint accompanied by a respectable slice of millet-pudding, still warm, and in thickness and consistency not unlike a piece of a good new baked barley *bannock*. Agreeably to eastern manners, his servant was in waiting to pour water on the hands of the guests, as the Mohammedans, like the Scribes and Pharisees of old, deem it sinful to eat with unwashen hands. Having performed the ceremony, the Mirza seized a joint, and requested me to help myself, which I did; and as there was only one knife at table, which, of course, fell to the chieftain himself, I had recourse to a good stout gardener's knife, which I happened to have in my pocket, and dined at the table of a mussulman, for the first time, with a good appetite, for which I was indebted in part to my morning's ride.

During dinner, a number of the villagers called on the Mirza, and, among others, an Effendi named Yachiah, with whom we conversed a little on the doctrines of Christianity, and found his views to be the same with those of Shora—but having been interrupted in our discussion, by the bustle of the conack-house, we failed in our attempt to command attention to the gospel message; and judging it more eligible to visit some of the other villagers when there might be fewer interruptions, we took our leave of the Mirza, and repaired to the house of Soen Hagi, whom we were sorry

to find so unwell, as to be unable, as he told us, to pay that attention to us and our message, which he could have wished. We endeavoured to turn his attention to the primary cause of all our diseases and troubles—the sins with which we are chargeable in the sight of God. He admitted the truth of what we said about the evil of sin, and acknowledged the necessity of repentance. On these points, however, his views were dark, and, as was naturally to be expected, erroneous. He had no idea of the necessity of an atonement, and imagined, that repentance was, of itself, sufficient to secure for us the pardon of sin. After hearing of the way in which he expected to escape the wrath to come, we pointed out to him "the way of salvation" revealed in the gospel, and explained the doctrine of the atonement made for sin by the death of Christ, and the nature of evangelical repentance, with the place it holds in the christian system. He started few objections, but seemed to take little interest in any thing we said, apologising for his listlessness by again adverting to his indisposition. Mr Galloway tells me this man seemed once to be much affected with the truths of the gospel, but instead of crying out with the jailor, "what must I do to be saved?" he told him not to speak any more to him in the name of Jesus. Thus it is that men will not come to *Him* that they might have life.

Called on a Georgian who lived hard by; and after conversing with him for a few minutes, were visited by a Tartar, who told us he wished to hear us respecting the way of salvation, and protested, that his not visiting the colony to receive instruction from the missionaries, was owing to the difficulty of getting past the sentinels at the gates of the village.* We endeavoured to obviate this objection, by telling him to say he had business to do with us, on doing which we hoped the soldiers would let him pass; and took occasion, in the

* The case of the sentinels is as follows: One of them stands at each gate of the village, and when travellers wish for admittance, his duty is to give notice to a brother-sentinel at the guard-house, who must tell the captain, with whom it rests to admit or refuse admittance, according to circumstances. But though the captain on duty is ready to grant the necessary facilities, the sentinels are often so dilatory in their movements, as to exhaust the patience of the Tartars. The consequence is, that unless there be some powerful secular motive to induce them, they choose rather to pass the village, than continue in waiting at the gates till the necessary formalities be gone through, and scarcely ever think of visiting the missionaries purely for the sake of hearing the gospel. The police above described, or some modification of it, is considered as necessary for protecting the property of the inhabitants from thieves and other banditti; the effects of whose depredations they have often felt; and as there is neither a wall nor a ditch around it, but merely a wattled fence, the Russian guard will not be accountable, as they now are, for property stolen from the village, unless they have the power of refusing admittance to suspicious characters.

mean time, to instruct him, as we were enabled, in the principles of the doctrine of Christ. He listened with some degree of interest,* and said the truths we told him were good. In so far, this was well; but still there seemed to be a want of that contrition for sin which made the publican exclaim, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!" and no indication of a willingness to take up the cross and follow Christ. Many months had elapsed since he told Mr Galloway that he was a christian at heart, though he feared to confess this before the Mohammedans, and though willing to hear, he was, in practice, still "halting between two opinions." May the Lord open his eyes to see the danger of continuing longer in the camp of the enemy, and dispose him to flee for salvation to the hope set before him in the gospel.

Called on Shillevey Effendi, and after the introductory civilities were over, requested him to read a chapter of the New Testament in my hearing, as I was curious to hear the pronunciation given to the Turkish words by the Tartars in this quarter. He consented, and read the third chapter of John's gospel. Took occasion from this, to direct his attention to

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* This is the man who applied for baptism, as afterwards mentioned.

the truths which had come under our view. He told us he had nothing to object to the morality recommended in the *gospel*, by which the Tartars and Persians understand *The book of the New Testament;* but took refuge in their usual strong hold, the (supposed) absurdity of the Sonship of Christ. "God is a Spirit, and how can he have a Son?" We told him, that in addressing his creatures, God was pleased to speak of himself in the language of men. Hence we hear, in the sacred writings, of the hands and the eyes of God, though, in their literal sense, the terms are totally inapplicable to a spirit. In a figurative sense, however, they are admirably fitted to suggest to us some idea of his knowledge and his power. In like manner, the term *Son*, when applied to the Messiah, is not to be understood literally, as suggesting the idea that he was begotten as men are, but in a spiritual or figurative sense, in which it might signify, that as a son has the same nature with his father, and stands in a peculiar relation to him, so the Messiah is a partaker of the Divine nature, and stands in a peculiar relation to God the Father. On this plan, he replied, the human nature of Christ began to exist in time, and the term Christ, or Messiah, must apply to him only from the time he became man. We answered, that, strictly speaking, the term was applicable unto him only from the time he assumed our

nature, and that the name given him before his incarnation, was *the Word;* in illustration of which, we read part of the first chapter of John's Gospel, and made some remarks as we went on. But resuming his objection, he remarked, that if the Word be God, as stated by the evangelist, he must be unchangeable; and how could the unchangeable Word become man? We answered, that the Divine nature of the Word underwent no change, but continued the same after the assumption of human nature, as before, though, at that time, a new relation commenced between his Divine person and the man Christ Jesus, which, till then, had no existence. Here we introduced the similitudes we had employed in our conversation with Shora—endeavouring to impress on his mind the consideration, that as the Divine nature continued the same after the creation of the universe, as before it, though, at the same time, there was undoubtedly the commencement of a new relation; so the divinity of the Word of God continued, and does continue, unchangeably the same, notwithstanding the union which subsists between the Divine and human nature in the person of Christ. I anticipated his attempting to elude the application of the similitude, by alleging that, in certain points, the cases were not parallel; but instead of doing this, he stated another objection, which he, no doubt, supposed

would militate against the scripture doctrine of the atonement. If the Word be God, how could he die? It was impossible for an unchangeable being to die. We told him it was the human nature that died—to which we might have added, though I am not sure we did so, that as the divine nature would continue the same, though the universe, with its inhabitants, were destroyed, and even annihilated, so the nature of the Word of God underwent no change when the man Christ Jesus died for sins, according to the scriptures. Relinquishing the objection, founded on the assumed incompatibility of the death of Christ, with his Divinity, he took up new ground, and with a degree of assurance that surprised me, denied the matter of fact, that the Messiah tasted of death at all, and maintained that the story of his crucifixion was altogether a deception. To this, and other opinions connected with it generally held by the votaries of Islamism, he adhered with the greater pertinacity, I am persuaded, in consequence of the presence of a Molla from Sultan village, before whom his policy forbade him to make any concessions, lest he should expose himself afresh to the vengeance of his Mohammedan brethren. In our endeavours to defend the important fact, that Christ was crucified, we reminded the two champions, that assertion and proof were two different things, and opposed the

evidence with which God had furnished us of the truth of the gospel histories, to their unsupported averments. To expose the falsehood of the assertion, that the apostles, whom Christ had chosen to be witnesses of the truth, were deceived by the crucifixion of one exactly resembling their master, we adverted to the miraculous powers conferred upon them on the day of Pentecost—the gift of tongues, for example, which was exercised, not in a corner, but publicly before thousands assembled to hear them; and asked them, if they supposed it possible for the apostles to speak in tongues they had never heard, without the inspiration of God, or if they supposed God would set his seal to a lie, by enabling them to speak strange languages, and work miracles in support of a false doctrine? He replied, that the scriptures now in the hands of christians, had been corrupted, and consequently not to be trusted. The gospel, in use among us, was a very different book from the true gospel given by God to faithful mussulmans; a term which they apply to all believers in the unity of God, as well before as after the coming of their favourite prophet. We asked them, what had become of the true gospel? It had been left with christians, and they had corrupted it. This, like their averment respecting the substitution of another in Christ's room to be crucified, was an assertion without

proof; and we told them in reply, that if the true gospel had been left with christians, as they themselves admitted, there was no room to doubt that the true gospel was in our hands still. It was well known that long before the coming of Mohammed, the New Testament had been translated into the Latin and Syriac languages, that numerous copies of it in the original Greek were in the hands of christians of various persuasions, in many different parts of the world, and that these, when brought from all quarters, and compared with each other, were found to be substantially the same. Centuries before Mohammed, there were Arians, who, like the Mohammedans, denied the Divinity of Christ; but they never called in question the authority of the New Testament, which they well knew was the same which had been put into the hands of the fathers of the christian church by the apostles. Had it been in the hands of only a few whose opinions were the same, an attempt might have been made to corrupt it, to serve a purpose, with some probability of success; but placed, as it was, in the hands of multitudes in remote quarters of the world, in different languages, and among sects whose opinions were often in direct opposition to each other, it could not be altered to serve the interest of one party, without the certainty of being detected and exposed by others, who had no purpose to serve by

countenancing the imposture. To the justness of the conclusion, they opposed nothing that could be considered either a plausible objection, or an artful evasion; but still persevered in maintaining, that the primitive christians were under a deception in believing the death of Christ, and that our books were corrupted. Like other Mohammedans, they maintained that Christ ascended to heaven, and, contrary to all expectation, admitted, though not very consistently with the principles of Islamism, that he was to be intercessor at the day of judgment.* In the course of conversation, I could remark a proneness to strike off, at a tangent, from the questions at issue, by

* According to the strict principles of Mohammedanism, their own prophet is to be intercessor at the day of judgment. They tell us, that when the judgment sits, the prophets, in their order, namely, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, will be asked to undertake the office of intercessor for their fellow creatures, but that each of them will excuse himself till it come to Mohammed, who will undertake to be an intercessor for all true Mussulmans. The excuse to be offered by Jesus Christ, is, "that he is ashamed to appear as an intercessor, because his followers have blasphemously called him the Son of God!"—a curious specimen of the logic, or rather the policy of the Mohammedan priesthood; for if Christ be ashamed to be called the Son of God, does it not follow that the Mohammedans do well in opposing the doctrines of his Sonship, and in considering them as heretics who according to them are so impious as to maintain it?

introducing some of their legendary traditions; the recital of which is much more congenial to the habits of Mohammedans, than the discussion of the evidences of the authenticity of the Scriptures.

I shall mention one of their legends as a specimen. Christ, they told us, was the most holy of all the prophets. His affections were almost completely withdrawn from sublunary things, insomuch that had it not been for one solitary attachment, which was not brought into proper subjection, he would have been received into the very highest heavens. The attachment, for entertaining which he lost the place he might otherwise have secured, was—to a comb with which he was in the habit of dressing his beard!

Having taken leave of Shillevey Effendi and the Molla, we called on one named Achmed, an Abbaza, whom we found affected with a kind of ague. We asked him whether the Effendies were in the habit of saying any thing to comfort and support his mind under his trouble. In reply, he said, they did nothing of the kind. We told him, the religion of God, revealed to us in the law and the gospel, was full of consolation to the afflicted; and after directing his attention to the death of Christ, in the room of guilty sinners, we set before him the consolations which this

doctrine was calculated to impart in the time of trouble, and the motives to the exercise of patient resignation, with which it furnished the pious, as they looked to Christ, "the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of the throne of God." He paid some little attention to what was said, and made scarcely any objections, but seemed much more anxious that Mr Galloway should furnish him with something to relieve him from the ague, than to hear of the consolations of the gospel.

Returned through the village to the area before the Mirza's conack-house, and prepared for retracing our steps to Karass, influenced by mingled emotions of hope and fear—compassion for the deluded votaries of the prophet, and grief for the hardness of their hearts. The population of Naiman village is considerable, and scattered over an extent of surface, which, in Scotland, would serve for a pretty respectable provincial town. Like Karass, it is surrounded with a wattled fence. The dwelling houses, that of the Mirza not excepted, are of the same materials, but plastered within and without, with a mixture of clay and dung, to protect them the better from the winter's cold, and so screen them from the

eye of observers, as to have a retreat which they can call their own.*

Oct. 26. After breakfast, called on my brother Mr Paterson, who, in the course of a few minutes, was visited by some Cabardians; one of whom was unwell, and wished Mr Paterson to prescribe for him, and give him medicine. They understood the Tartar language, and as Mr Paterson told me he was ready to interpret, if I wished to say a few things for their instruction, I thankfully accepted his co-operation; and availing myself of the circumstance that occasioned their calling, directed their attention to the primary cause of all our sicknesses and pains—the curse of God entailed on mankind for the breaking of his holy covenant. In consequence of this, we told them, the bodies of men are subject to disease and death, and their souls polluted with sin. Men, it was remarked, are naturally anxious to have the diseases of their bodies removed by medicine or otherwise; but, for the most part, pay

* I understand that, for several years after their arrival, the missionaries had houses of this description—constructed, however, on an improved plan. Instead of the mixture, the clay and dung are sometimes used separately, but the mixture is reckoned best, the dung performing the same service to the clay, that hair does to plaster-lime, by rendering it more tenacious, and preventing rents in the coating of the walls.

little attention to the diseases of the soul, which are much more dangerous. We knew of no specific for the certain cure of bodily distempers, but were happy to tell them there was an infallible remedy for those of the soul —a tried remedy, which had never failed—a physician who was able to cure the most inveterate disorders. This physician had revealed himself to the faithful in the time of the prophet Moses, saying, "I am the Lord that healeth thee," and had been as good as his word, in all succeeding generations. In the fulness of time he appeared in our nature, as the Messiah promised unto the fathers, curing the bodies of those who were diseased, and healing the souls of all who came to him for deliverance from their spiritual maladies. Here we directed their attention, more particularly, to the character and work of Christ, to his death and resurrection, shewing that "he is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." "His blood cleanseth from all sin."

Finding that we not only asserted the matter of fact that Christ was crucified, (a point which the Mohammedans are taught in their Coran to deny) but ascribed our being healed, from the disease of sin, to the efficacy of his blood; one of them asserted, with the same boldness the Effendi had discovered yesterday,

that the Messiah had ascended to heaven without tasting death, and rehearsed the way in which, according to their teachers, his escape had been effected. The Messiah having been apprehended and confined in a small apartment or hole, from which there was no way of egress but one, the angel Gabriel came and asked him why he did not make his escape? He answered, that the opening was barely sufficient for his head, and far too small for his shoulders to pass. Gabriel told him to use the sign of the cross, and he would find the opening sufficient. He did so, and having thus effected his escape, ascended to heaven, far beyond the reach of his foes. Mr Paterson reminded him, that for this story there was no proof; and asked him if he would believe a person who should take it into his head to tell him that Georghievsk, with its inhabitants, had been swallowed up in consequence of an earthquake or otherwise, without satisfactory evidence of its truth? He said he would not. Mr Paterson then applied his concession to the case in hand; after which the conversation closed.

Returned to my lodgings, and in less than half an hour Mr Galloway introduced a Cabardian who had called on him, and with whom, as he understood Tartar, we entered into conversation on the subject of religion. On being told of the scriptures of truth, the

contents of which we recommended to his serious attention, he excused himself by telling us he could not read—adding, with an air of indifference, "that is the business of the Mollas and Effendies." From his way of talking, I was tempted to think he considered reading as a thing that none but professional men should trouble themselves with; and asked him if it was not necessary for the chiefs to learn reading in his country, assuring him it was the custom in ours. He answered it was not; and suspecting it should seem, from our way of putting the question, that we were ignorant of his rank as an Wyden, or nobleman, as well as of his being the first chieftain in Tram Cabak, a Cabardian village some twenty or thirty versts up the Podcuma, he told his name and family to Mr Galloway, who, though he did not know him by person, had heard of the family, and informed me of the quality of our visitor. But as we were not disposed to sustain either his incapacity to read, or his rank among his countrymen, as a valid reason for declining to attend to the instructions we were ready to give him, we reminded him that he had a soul to be saved or lost, and recommended the importance of hearing and thinking for himself, without taking it for granted, as he seemed to do, that it was no business of his to ascertain which was the true religion. Here again he excused himself by alleging,

that God had given to every people the religion that was best for them. We had our religion, which, he had no doubt, suited us very well; the Russians, &c. had theirs: To the Cabardians God had given the religion of the Coran, and it was best for them to keep by it. "What am I," continued he, "that I should pretend to think about religion, or ascertain which is the best way? This belongs to the Effendies. I believe as they tell me, and if I am wrong, the blame is theirs." In this stage of the conversation, we had recourse to a similitude, to shew that both he and they were to blame. Suppose a number of people from the different nations, of which we have been speaking—Turks, Russians, Cabardians, &c. were about to undertake a pilgrimage to some far distant city, say to Mecca, and that the roads which led to it were known to be so dangerous, as to render the utmost circumspection indispensable. Suppose, farther, that in these circumstances several persons proposed themselves as guides—that of these there was one in particular who could produce unquestionable evidence that he knew a road by which, with proper precaution, the pilgrims might reach their destination in safety; and equally satisfactory evidence, that, if they attempted the pilgrimage by any other roads, they must, beyond all peradventure, perish, as the dangers were so great as to make travelling in

them impracticable; and suppose, likewise, that, to serve a purpose, the other guides should each of them recommend a road of his own, different from that of the first guide, without producing evidence of their capacity to conduct the pilgrims, and that they were withal so ignorant of the dangers of the path they recommended, and so unable to afford protection, as to make the destruction of themselves and followers inevitable; what would he think of such pretenders? He answered, that he would reckon them very bad men, and very much to blame for misleading the pilgrims. And what would he think of the pilgrims themselves, if, without being at the pains to examine the evidence which the first guide had to produce, they placed themselves under the impostors? Would any blame attach to them when destruction overtook them? Most undoubtedly; they should have examined the evidence which the qualified guide had to produce, and placed themselves under his protection.—Having proceeded thus far with the similitude, we came to the application. There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. He has furnished the most satisfactory evidence of his ability to guide the weary pilgrims to the temple of God, and has commanded his servants to exhibit the evidence publicly, for the satisfaction of all who wish to undertake

the pilgrimage. There are others who pretend to be guides besides Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of christians; but where is the evidence of their ability to guide us in safety through the dangers we must pass. If you follow any of these guides, and refuse to follow the Messiah, you must perish. You have been told this, and are not you to blame for refusing to think of the evidences of his divine mission, and of his being the only Saviour.* To this question, the only reply he had to make was, that these were points about which we should speak to the Mollas and Effendies; as for him, he was not qualified to judge of them. Instead of pressing closer upon him, by prosecuting the application, we paused,

* On conversing with a countryman of his, more lately, I introduced another circumstance into the similitude, which, in addressing a Mohammedan, had something in it of the *argumentum ad hominem*; namely, that the way by which the first guide proposed to lead them, was the road in which it was acknowledged on all hands that pilgrims had been wont to travel, and which, under his guidance, they found practicable and safe, whereas the other, (in the conversation referred to, I supposed only two guides) who, though he maintained that his road was the safe one, had no evidence to support his claims, was a new guide, and without experience. Being a shrewd man, he foresaw the consequences—smiled and shook his head, but declined giving a categorical answer to the question, which of the two guides is most to be depended upon?

that he might have time to breathe and reflect a little on what had been said, and then, directing the conversation into another channel, asked him whether we could be permitted to visit the Cabardians in his village. Of this he seemed at first to be doubtful, telling us that as the village was beyond the quarantine, he believed we could not to be permitted to visit the village, and return home without standing quarantine;* but recollecting himself, he added, that by getting a few Cozaks along with us, and returning the same night, we might be allowed by the Russian government; and for his part, he would be happy to see us. As the conversation went on, he began to discover a wish that we should pay him a visit soon; and as an inducement for us to do so, assured us, that on coming to the village, he would turn out all his men, and make them go through various manœuvres in horsemanship and archery—after which, to shew his own superiority in skill as well as in authority, he would perform a feat in archery, on horseback, which no man in the village could

* The quarantine is six or seven versts from Karass, and its regulations are very properly enforced by the Russian government, on persons coming from places beyond the frontiers, to prevent (as far as human prudence can go) the introduction of the plague from the mountains where it is every now and then making its appearance.

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do but himself. During this part of the conversation, he was all life, and seemed, in imagination, to realise the applause he, no doubt, supposed would be lavished on him when we actually saw him carry off the palm. "Vanity of vanities," saith the preacher, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Oct. 27. Took a ride with Mr Galloway to a Cabardian village, named Hagi-Kabak, about two versts from Karass, and was welcomed to the place by Islam Abaziwan, one of the oldest, and not the least respectable of the Cabardian Wydens in this neighbourhood. The village is situated nearly south-east of the summit of Beshtow, not far from the spot where the craggy shoulder of the mountain meets the ridge by which it is connected with Mashûka, (the hot water mountain*) and commands a charming view of Alburrows, and the adjacent snow mountains in the Caucasian range. Having been told by Mr Galloway that Islam had a pretty accurate knowledge of these mountains, and of the inhabitants with which their vales are replenished, I proposed some questions to him concerning them on which he went out with us to the court before his house, and with the utmost frankness an-

* See Journal, Oct. 19.

swered our enquiries to the extent of his knowledge, respecting all the mountain tribes whose habitations were within the range of vision.

Right before us, nearly south-west by south, at the distance of about an hundred versts, lay Alburrows. From the north side of it the Cuban takes its rise; the banks of which, near its source, are peopled by the Caratchai, a tribe of Tartars, of whom mention is made in my conversations with Shora.* The number of families, according to Islam, is about three hundred, and, like the Cabardians, they are Mohammedans. Beyond the Caratchai, on the south-west line, live the Hashipsi, or, as the Cabardians name them, Abazas, who speak a language of their own, differing from the Tartar, the Cabardian, and that of the neighbouring tribes. They, too, are the followers of Mohammed. The rivulets by which their country is watered, run towards the Black Sea. At a still greater distance, is another people named the Sonnas, who, like the Abazas, have a language of their own, which bears no resemblance to any which the Cabardians have had an opportunity of hearing. They call themselves Christians, and their books, or rather those of their forefathers, which none of them can read, are lodged in

* See Journal, Oct. 20.

their churches, which are falling into decay. Of this people there are three tribes, one of which is only about thirty versts from the Abazas. The other two tribes are distant from the Abazas about two days journey on the other side of the mountain.* Between the Abazas and Georgia, the mountains are impassable for persons on horseback, but may be crossed, though not without difficulty, by a few active young men on foot. On the north-east of Alburrows, the Shegim river takes its rise, directing its course to the Caspian. On the banks of it, to a considerable distance from its source, live the Shegims. The number of families belonging to the tribe is from two to three hundred. They profess the Mohammedan religion, and speak a dialect of the Tartar language. Farther down, however, the banks of the Shegim are peopled by the Cabardians, whose border, on the south, extends from the Caratchai country, along the bottom of the snow mountains, as far as the eye can reach. Their northern frontier, in the neighbourhood of Beshtow, is the Podcuma, a few versts distant from the spot on which we took our observations. West of the Abazas, the mountains are inhabited by various tribes, the greater part of which speak dialects of the Cabardian, Abaza, and Tartar languages. East of the Shegims, they are inhabited by tribes, speaking dialects of a great many different

languages, of which the most noted are the Tchitchian and Ossitinian; but of these and other eastern tribes, his information was not so minute. Returned to Islam's house, and partook of a hospitable repast. In the course of our conversation he told us, that our books and the existence of settlers at Beshtow from a far country, who discoursed with people about the Christian religion, were known not only among his countrymen the Çabardians, but more or less among all the mountain tribes whose places of abode he had been pointing out to us. The character generally given the missionaries, was, that they were the best of the Gewrs or unbelievers—a term of reproach equivalent to that of infidel in Europe, and given to all who refuse their allegiance to Mohammed, whether Christians, Pagans, or Jews. Their ancestors in Cabardia, he told us, were Christians, and he knew an old man who recollected the time when swine's flesh was in use among some of them. In these times, the manners of his countrymen were much less depraved than now. Then a man's bare word could be depended on; now the most solemn engagements and promises were disregarded. We took occasion to point out to him the superior excellence of the truths of the gospel, and recommended them to his attention; but while he admitted the things were good and salutary, he declared his

resolution to hold by the religion in which he had been educated—adding, that Mr Galloway and he were always good friends, and never differed except on the subject of religion, about which, he was sure they would never agree, and therefore it was best for them to avoid discussion, and to worship God each in his own way. After addressing to him such exhortations as it struck us he was able to bear, we mounted our horses, and proceeded through the village to the house of another Wyden, named Tehier, who likewise received us courteously.

On being told I was from Astrachan, and had lately come from Britain, he enquired if I knew any thing of Sultan Katte-Gherry, who, he understood, had gone to our country. After telling him what appeared worth reporting respecting the movements of the Sultan, I mentioned that it was intended he should settle in the Crimea, along with some of our countrymen, whose object was to teach the people to read and understand the holy scriptures, which were able to make them wise unto salvation. After adverting to the excellence of the sacred books in the hands of Christians, and the wisdom of listening to their instructions, we glanced at the operations of the Bible Societies in Europe, and the benefits resulting from the attempts made by these, and similar institutions, to diffuse the knowledge of God in all quarters of the world. We told them

(for by this time there were others collected in the conack-house beside our host) that the time had been when the Effendies in our country kept the scriptures concealed from the people, and put it out of their power to examine them for themselves—that at present things were on a very different footing, as the people at large had the books of God put into their hands, and were taught to read them, and that, from experience, it was found that those who perused the scriptures and believed them, were much better characters than those who neglected them. By way of application, we added, that finding the books so very beneficial at home, we had come to their country, to make the contents of them known to them, as we understood they were almost unknown among the Tartars and Cabardians, and that, in doing so, we had acted just as a man who had been cured of some grievous distemper would do, if influenced by compassion for others who were affected by the same disease, and ignorant of the specific that cured him, he should make it known to his friends, and send them throughout the neighbourhood to inform the diseased respecting its healing virtues. He answered, that it was a happy circumstance the books had been so useful in our country. It should seem they were well suited for our people—and, indeed, continued he, all the four books are excellent. It must be so; for they

came from God. They were all good, each of them, in its time, for the people for whom they were intended—but as God had given the Cabardians the Coran, he feared some dreadful judgment would come upon them, were they to receive our books and embrace our religion. It was a dangerous thing for men to change their religion. In illustration of this, he told us a story about an impostor who had persuaded the Persians to embrace a corrupted system of Islamism; for doing which, God had visited them with most tremendous calamities. In Persia, he told us, there was a particular kind of tree which, after being cut from its stock, would, if properly set, grow together again, and appear as if nothing of the kind had taken place. The impostor knew this, and, despairing of being able to persuade the people to embrace his opinions by fair means, he cut the tree in two, making an incision in the heart of it sufficient to contain a book in which he had taken care to write his creed; after which, he united the two parts so skilfully, that, in a short time, it was impossible to discover a trace of the operation. Meanwhile he urged the people to embrace his opinions, which, he assured them, were from God, and after affecting to be much grieved by their incredulity, asked them if they would not believe him if a book, containing the very doctrines he had been teaching them, was found in

the heart of a tree which he would point out to them, and in which the book had been placed by God. Ignorant of the artifice of the impostor, they consented; the tree was cut, the book was found, and supposing it to be from God, the people accepted of its doctrines, and, by doing this, brought upon themselves all the calamities which followed. There were times, he added, at which nations were given up by God to a kind of infatuation, which provoked Him to punish them with extraordinary judgments, and, he feared, it would be ill indeed for the Cabardians, if they became so infatuated as to give up the religion which God had given them for ours. To remove the dreadful foreboding, we reminded him that, unlike the impostor he had described, we went about our work openly, and courted investigation—and that, so far from pretending we had any new revelation, the books we recommended were the very books which they themselves acknowledged had come from God—the Taurat, the Zabur, and the Angile.* I was aware, indeed, that their great bulwark, the supposed corruptions of the sacred text, by the impious hands of Christians, was open for him to flee to. Of this, however, he did not avail himself; but without alleging there was any thing

* The Law, the Psalms, and the Gospel.

clandestine in our conduct, or pernicious in our books, he kept the open field of plausible argumentation, and proceeded to shew, by a pretty apt similitude, that granting all we contended for, about the divine origin of the scriptures, there was good reason, in his opinion, to fear the consequences of embracing our religion. It was well known, he remarked, that the Emperor of Russia issues forth new money for the use of his subjects, and recals the old when it pleases him; and he has a right to do so. Just now, continued he, there is an issue of new notes, and the old ones are recalled. The old notes and coins were each of them good, in their time, but when the old ones were recalled, and the new ones issued, the use of the former came, in time, to be superseded, though they had beeen all good in their day. Now, said he, with an air of triumph, if the Emperor has power to recal old money that was perfectly good in its time, and to issue forth new, could we deny that God has the power of altering the form of religion when he pleases, or that his creatures should be obedient to his commands in this as in every thing else? It was answered, that his illustration was a good one, and that we could not, and did not, deny that God had power to alter the form of religion when he thinks proper—a concession at the hearing of which his eyes beamed with self-complacency,

while his attitude and gestures furnished unequivocal indications of a conviction, that we were on the point of sounding a retreat, or patching up a truce, on the best terms we could obtain. Before quitting our position, however, we asked him whether it was not a reasonable thing that the subjects of the emperor should have satisfactory evidence that the new money offered them, had been actually issued by his order, before they accepted of it in place of the old. He answered, it was perfectly reasonable. And if a governor, in any remote province, were to abuse the confidence reposed in him, and issue counterfeit money, would the people be bound to accept of it, or would they do it? Certainly they would not, was his reply. In making the application of these concessions to the case in hand, we remarked, that before laying aside a form of religion that was known to be from God, as ours was, for a new form of religion like theirs, it was equally reasonable for us to demand evidence that it had come from God, and that till this was produced, we were under no obligation to accept of it, nor would we act wisely if we did so.

To the soundness of this reasoning, he did not object; and had the discussion been with a learned Effendi or Mufti, we might have entered, at once, into an abstract disquisition on the nature of evidence, in its application to the point at issue; but as this was out of the

question with a Cabardian Wyden, we declined attempting it; and instead of prosecuting his similitude farther, begged leave to illustrate the claims of Islamism and Christianity by another, which we hoped he would admit to be a fair one; assigning as a reason, that, owing to the nature of the subject, it was much more difficult to detect impositions in religion, than to expose the bad qualities of counterfeit money, which were cognizable by the senses.

Suppose the Emperor to pass a law, respecting the kind of food to be used by his subjects, as he had formerly done respecting the current money of the realm, and that the people, on adopting the diet recommended, had found it remarkably nutritive. In the course of a few years, the Emperor sees cause, from the circumstances of the country, to issue a new edict respecting diet, which, on being published, is immediately obeyed; and the people, to their great joy, find it not less nutritive and wholesome than that to which they had been accustomed. But, in process of time, a governor, in one of the remote provinces, gives out, that a new edict has been issued by his Majesty, appointing a diet different in many points from the food which they had found so nutritive, and positively prohibits the use of it. Meanwhile the governor of an adjacent province continues the use of the diet,

which, it was admitted on all hands, the Emperor had commanded in his second edict. The people, in both provinces, are steadfast in their allegiance to the Emperor, whose will they wish to obey; but having no medium of correspondence with him, to ascertain how the case really stands, and being each of them attached to their respective governors, they implicitly follow their dictates, and mutually reproach each other with disloyalty, the one for using a diet which the Emperor saw good reason for interdicting; the other for laying it aside after it had been in use, and substituting, instead of it, a diet which had never been commanded. In the course of a few years, however, it is found that those who used the new food, became all of them sickly, and many of them dangerously ill, insomuch that the whole province is full of misery, while the inhabitants of the province which adhered to the second edict, thrive remarkably well, and are subject to none of the diseases which have sprung up in the adjacent province, since they altered their diet. In this case, what inference would an impartial observer be warranted to draw, respecting the will of the Emperor, who is the father of his people? Which of the governors would they believe? The one who enjoined the new diet, on which nobody could live with comfort, or him who stood by the second edict? Would they not have reason to

conclude that, to serve a purpose, the former had recommended and enforced the noxious diet without authority, and that the latter was in the right, who assured them the Emperor's pleasure was to continue the old regimen and reject the new? His answer was just what was anticipated. There could be little doubt, he thought, that he was in the right who stood by the second edict, and that those who listened to him acted wisely. No sooner had he made this concession, than we began our application. The parallel to the first edict is the law of Moses. The second has a parallel in the Gospel of Christ, which, when received and acted upon, is productive of the most beneficial consequences in time and through eternity.* The parallel to the governor, who interdicted the food recommended in the second edict, is to be found in the author of the Coran, for, by the acknowledgement of the Ca-

* It is almost needless to remark, that, with the pen of a Fuller, it were easy to shew that the Christian system is, in all respects, incomparably more salutary than that of Mohammed, and free from the deadly poison with which it is intermixed; and, consequently, that the *argumentum ad hominem* used in our conversation with Tehier, is founded in truth. Had that accomplished reasoner entered the lists with the votaries of Islamism, as he had done successfully with those of Socinianism, he would have found a singular coincidence in the fundamental principles of the sceptic and the Arabian enthusiast.

bardians themselves, they are much worse than their fathers, who professed the Christian religion. On observing the consequences which followed from his concessions, his countenance fell: for a few moments silence ensued; no attempt was made to say any thing farther in defence of the pretensions of the Coran; and, as it struck us, it might answer a better purpose to give him time to think calmly of the case as it stood, than to ruffle his mind by enveighing against its author, we suffered the conversation to be imperceptibly diverted into another channel, taking care, however, not to lose sight of the object of our visit.

Left Hagi Cabak, and directed our course to another Cabardian village, named Carma Cabak, near the bottom of Beshtow, and not much out of our road in returning home. Called on the chief of the village, an oldish man, of a noble, interesting countenance, by whom we were welcomed to the place, and invited to his house. Entered into conversation with him on general subjects, from which we turned his attention, by little and little, to the concerns of eternity. We informed him what efforts were making by the friends of Christ in our native country, to make known the Gospel in distant lands; and adverted to the success with which it had pleased Providence to crown the labours of some of them, in different parts; and particularly in the South Sea

Islands, the inhabitants of which had thrown away their idols, and become the worshippers of the One only, the living and the true God, through the One Mediator Jesus Christ. These, he replied, were good news. He was happy to hear that idolaters were turned to God. The morality of our books was good, and among the heathen the knowledge of them might be useful. As for the people in their quarter, God had given them the Coran, which recommended good morals, too, and condemned every kind of wickedness; and therefore it was foolish for us to imagine we should be able to turn any of them to our religion, except we succeeded, in the first place, in converting their Mollas and Effendis. In this case, he had little doubt, the people would follow, and it would give him much pleasure, he said, to hear the subject discussed, in their presence, as they understood the matter fully, and could answer our objections. As for himself, he knew little about religion, and could not pretend to decide between us. We told him, we should be very happy to have a conversation on the subject with some of their learned men, for his satisfaction, as we did every thing openly, and were not ashamed to confess our faith before them; but that we taught, as we had opportunity, without waiting till they made their appearance. All men had souls to be saved or lost; and as Christ

had given us commandment, we warned all to flee from the wrath to come. We added, that the Mohammedan Mollas and Effendis did not agree among themselves, as he very well knew, and, therefore, it behoved him to think which was in the right, even among them; and that it was the surest, and, in all respects, the best way for him to prove all things by examining for himself, and to hold fast that which is good. We wished him well. We had the Scriptures of truth in our hands, which he had not, and we were only doing to him as we would wish him to do to us in similar circumstances, in making known their contents. He admitted the fairness of our professions, in general terms, but instead of listening to them, kept us at bay for a good part of an hour, by a pretty artful use of the *argumentum ad hominem*, as if determined to make reprisals for the use we had been making of it among his brethren of the Mohammedan faith. "Ye have a religion," he said, "which ye tell us is better than any other, and ye profess that, in making it known, ye do to others as ye wish them to do to you. This has been your way of talking from the first. Ye came here, and entertained us with fair speeches, till you got our lands taken from us, and secured to yourselves. Was this doing to others as ye could wish them to do to you? Who, think you, can believe your professions after having

acted in this manner?" The lands, we told him, had been assigned to us by government, which had a right to dispose of them; and as he must allow they were much better with us for neighbours, than with their own countrymen; not to speak of the obvious fact, that we had only a small part of the land appropriated to our own use, the greater part of it being in the hands of the Germans, while he and others of his countrymen were permitted, at times, to graze their cattle, cut hay, &c. &c. without charge. Neither Germans, nor any other description of strangers, he rejoined, would have ventured to settle in this wild region, unless you had set them the example. We endeavoured, by various references and appeals to what is considered as just and right, to shew the absurdity of laying it down as a maxim, that it was incumbent on us to settle all the disputes of former occupants, before accepting a grant from the legal proprietors; but so far were we from producing conviction, or putting him to silence, that, for a time, we were so hard put to it, as almost to despair of being able to secure, what a Cabardian would consider an honourable retreat. For securing this, the most eligible plan seemed to be, first to fix the marches on the spot, down to the time our brethren came to Russia, and then to borrow our illustration from a quarter where his prejudices were less likely to mislead him

than our former ones, in forming a judgment on a parallel case. In answer to our queries, respecting the frontiers at the time referred to, he admitted that the Podcuma was considered as the northern boundary of the Cabardians, and that Karass was decidedly within the Russian lines. We then put the following questions: Supposing that you, or any of your friends, had occasion to settle in some part of European Turkey, would you consider it wrong to accept of a grant of lands from the Sultan of Constantinople, or after having received them free of legal claims, would you give up to this or the other family of Greeks, who might come and say, "these lands granted you by the Sultan, should by right be ours? They belonged to our forefathers for generations—this was well known to you—Why did you come from a far country, and take our lands?" In reply, he said, that the Grand Sultan certainly had a right to dispose of the lands according to law, and that he, or any of his friends, might lawfully accept of the grant, and as lawfully retain it. On the very same principle, it was answered, we are justifiable in accepting and retaining the lands granted us by his Imperial Majesty. In former times, our lands had belonged to the Cabardians—true—but before our arrival, they were acknowledged by the whole world to be within the boundaries of the Russian empire: and if grants

made in the one case, be lawfully retained, they must be equally so in the other. On hearing the application of the parallel, he seemed a little disconcerted, but had sufficient presence of mind to retreat without much apparent confusion, remarking that he was a plain man, and did not pretend to understand the law of nations, only he thought it proper to tell us what was in his mind. Having brought the matter to this issue, we told him we had not come to settle old disputes about lands, but to pay him a friendly visit; and after conversing a few minutes longer, and dropping such remarks as appeared suitable, we parted with him on good terms, and took the road for Karass. In our progress, I could not help feeling sorry that our possessing the land, should be so galling to the natives; for though, in point of law, the grievance be an imaginary one, it is easy to conceive how human nature must operate, as they glance at the land of their fathers' sepulchres. It would require no mighty effort of genius for a barrister to shew, to the conviction of judge and jury, that the grievances complained of by the Highlanders of Scotland, many of whom have been turned out of districts possessed by their fathers for centuries, are imaginary, and ought forthwith to be dismissed; but in many cases, it would be found beyond the power of rhetoric to convince them, their children, or even

their children's children, that the farmers who now occupy their lands, have done them no injury.*

Oct. 28. Were visited at the mission-house by four Cabardians, among whom I was happy to recognise Teheir the Wyden, to whom; after disposing of his similitude of money, I had yesterday illustrated the superiority of the Christian to the Mohammedan religion, by the similitude of two kinds of food, the one nutritive, the other unwholesome and noxious. One of his companions was an oldish man and a noble, the other two were of inferior rank. A number of books were on the table, and in other parts of the room, some of which being new, attracted their attention. We shewed them a few of them, which, it struck us, might excite their curiosity, and lead to some useful conversation, and, among others, a Hebrew Bible and a Greek Testament, the one of which, we told them, contained the books which had come from God, before the manifestation of Christ; the other, the books which

* I have heard the same grievances urged or alluded to on other occasions; and though the occupation of the lands by the missionaries is now an old story, the supposed iniquity of the thing will long be remembered by the natives, and cast in our teeth whenever it serves their purpose.

had come from God after it, in the language in which they were respectively written. None of them could read books of any kind, but they could, nevertheless, recognize a difference between the Hebrew, and Greek, and Arabic characters, which they had been accustomed to see in the hands of scholars in their own country, which opened up the way for attempting to remove certain vulgar prejudices, urged by the Mohammedans against our books, as being modern compositions, the corrupted mutilated remains of books which had come from God, but which were now incapable of being verified as an authentic exhibition of his will. The popular idea, in this quarter, is, that the law and the gospels have been lost, and that we, therefore, made it our care to impress them with the conviction that these were true copies of the books written by the prophets and apostles, under the inspiration of the Almighty, and that it was to these originals that the appeal was made among Christians, from all the versions which had been made of them, into the various languages into which they had been translated. Read to them in Hebrew,* the promise made to Ab-

* I was not aware, for some time, of the importance of producing the originals of the Scriptures, and reading parts of them in the presence of unlettered Mohammedans; but did so as Mr Galloway said it might have a good effect in pre-

raham, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, from which, on being thrown into Tartar by Mr Galloway, we took occasion to make known unto them, at considerable length, the history of the life and death of the Messiah promised unto the fathers in its connection with the salvation of his people. We set before them the necessity of Christ's death for the fulfilment of the Scriptures, and for the deliverance of perishing sinners from the curse of the Divine law; and directed their attention to the influence of the belief of Christ's death, in leading Chris-

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paring the way for removing their prejudices. When he was itinerating among them, they had often demanded the originals of our Scriptures, and reckoned it little short of an evasion, to be told the Christian Effendis were possessed of them, and could read them; and as the books were at hand, he wished to give them ocular demonstration. Nor was it altogether in vain; for not to speak of the favourable impression it made on the individuals that were present, the news of it seems to have circulated in the neighbourhood, and engaged the attention of the Mohammedans, one of whom, from Sultan village, (fifteen versts distant) having heard of the circumstance, called to see the Tawrat. Mr Galloway gave him the book of Genesis, which has lately been published in Tartar. He answered, that was not the book he wanted, and on proceeding to describe it more particularly, it struck Mr Galloway it would be the Hebrew Bible. We produced and read part of it, and of the Greek Testament, offering suitable explanations and reflections as we went on, in all which he seemed to take a considerable interest.

tians to hate sin, which had been the cause of their Saviour's sufferings—to admire the love of God in sending him into the world, and to keep his commandments because they had been redeemed by his blood. In illustration of the influence of evangelical faith, in forming the character, we told them, that in our country those were found to be the best members of society, who had the greatest respect for Christ; and that, on the other hand, the want of faith in him was found to open the door to every kind of wickedness. Christ, we reminded them, had come into the world, not for any one particular people, to the exclusion of others, but for the salvation of all that would receive him, whether they were Englishmen, Russians, or Cabardians; and if they would accept of him as their Saviour, they would find life unto their souls. When about to take their leave of us, the old man requested Mr Galloway to tell me, that his heart was refreshed by the things he had heard from us; and the rest of them joined him in thanking us for our instructions, declaring that it was to hear of such things that they had called on us.

Oct. 31. Had the pleasure of another visit from Teheir, accompanied by one of his Cabardian friends. Made some enquiries respecting the religious instructions given them

by their Effendis, with a view to open the way for correcting their errors, and giving them such views of the truth as might appear suitable to their circumstances, and level to their capacities. In answer to our enquiries, they told us that their Effendis exhorted them to avoid sin—to repent of past transgressions —to pray to God at the stated seasons (five times a-day)—and to be punctual in paying tithes. These are the chief things required of true Mussulmans. A wish, on our part, for information respecting the efficacy of repentance, led to a set of questions and answers, of which the following is a specimen ·

Q. Do your Effendis encourage the hope of forgiveness if you repent?

A. They do; except in the case of great offenders, such as murderers, adulterers, &c. for the salvation of whom repentance will not do.

Q. What then? Do your Effendis hold out no hope of salvation for such characters, on supposition their repentance is sincere, and leads to the amendment of their lives?

A. No: such persons must go to hell.

Q. Is there no salvation for them at all in your system?

A. In the case of murder, the criminal may escape the punishment of hell, by giving a

proper compensation to the friends of the murdered, provided they agree to accept of it; otherwise, so far as they know, there was no hope for the murderer.*

Having heard their account of the Mohammedan creed, we acquainted them with the doctrines of Scripture respecting the evil of

* According to the Mohammedans, a penitent may entertain the hope of escaping the punishment of sins committed against God himself, in whole or in part, however aggravated—because God is merciful and ready to forgive; but the case, they affirm, is altogether different when flagrant injuries have been done to our fellow-creatures, who have a right to insist on full satisfaction, and, being less merciful than God, often do so. In this case, the cup of vengeance must be drunk to the dregs. In a conversation we afterwards had with Shilleyey Effendi, who gave this account of the matter, we endeavoured to point out the absurdity of the tenet, plausible though it appear to be, by adverting to the principles of jurisprudence, in well regulated states among men, and to the relation in which the whole human race stand to God, as Judge of the universe, whose decisions must be regulated by the principles of justice and mercy revealed in his word, and not by the revengeful caprice of sinful mortals. The policy of the doctrine might, with the atheistical counsellors, admit of some vindication, on the ground that it was likely to operate as a powerful check on those lusts, whence come wars and fightings; but the Judge of all the earth, indignant at the impious daring of the legislator of Mecca, has turned his wise policy into foolishness, by suffering his followers to become the victims of the ruthless spirit of murder, to a greater extent, perhaps, than has been exemplified even among the votaries of Juggernaut or Moloch.

sin, and the deplorable condition of the human race, as being sinners by nature and practice, and pointed out to them our inability to work out our own deliverance either by repentance or otherwise. We then directed their attention to the freeness and fulness of the gospel salvation, shewing them that, in consequence of our being made partakers, by faith of the righteousness wrought out by our Redeemer, God is at once just and the

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And as for their females, it may be in truth asserted, that, for the most part, their virtue is to be measured by the strictness of the watch set upon them by their husbands, who, having bought them with their money, reckon themselves intitled to treat them as their slaves, or by the dread of shame and other evils, which the want of it will bring in its train in this life, rather than by any apprehensions which they have of the consequences of the resentment of their injured husbands and affronted kindred, in that which is to come. In Astrachan, the wives or concubines of the Persians, were wont to look down upon the court-yard of the late mission-house, through the iron grates of their windows, just as the prisoners in the tolbooths of Edinburgh and Glasgow do on passengers walking at liberty,—a blessing, to the sweets of which, alas! poor creatures, their hearts are strangers. Shut up in their prison, with orders to sit with their backs to their grated windows, I am told, they dare not steal even a passing glance at their fellow-creatures, in presence of their lordly masters, without provoking their jealousy, and risking the effect of their resentment. Ladies of Scotland, and other parts of the British isles, look at the picture and weep! The gospel of Christ alone can set them free. I leave it to yourselves to make the application.

justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. This last point we illustrated by the well-known similitude of a debtor who, on having his debts paid by a surety, is set free by the judge in perfect consistency with the principles of justice. On hearing our illustration, they exclaimed, this is just and right. After endeavouring to impress on their minds the solid confidence of the man who knows his debts are paid by a benefactor who has, moreover, become surety for him in time to come, compared with that of the man who has nothing to plead but his penitential tears; we next adverted to the evidence we have that God is fully satisfied with the surety-righteousness of Christ, in that he raised him from the dead, received him into heaven, and invested him with universal power for the protection of his people, and for the destruction of their enemies. Nor did we neglect to give them a view of the nature of repentance and of the place which it holds in the Christian system, by pointing out the necessity of it, in order to our being made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. It was so far satisfactory to observe them listening with apparent interest to these truths, and ready to acknowledge their excellence and suitableness; but distressing to think, as we had too much reason to do, that their hearts were little affected with their sense of their need of a Sa-

viour, and that the approbation they gave to them was as much out of complaisance, as from conviction.

During our excursion to Naiman village, Hagi-Cabak, &c. the moral and religious degradation of the natives in the immediate vicinity of the colony, naturally became the subject of discourse, and from them the transition was easy to the situation of their brethren of the Mohammedan faith at a greater distance.

From the notices we had received, it appeared that, with proper precautions, the recesses of the mountains might be penetrated, in peaceful times, not indeed without danger, but with much less hazard than has often been risked by travellers, whose highest ambition was bounded by motives far inferior to those by which the Christian missionaries profess to be influenced. But from all accounts the affairs of the mountains were so unsettled, and their minds so agitated by circumstances which it is unnecessary to describe, that there was greater risk of being taken for spies than at any former period for half a century past; and, as strong suspicion might, with them as

with other barbarians, pass for proof, it was easy to see, that if a European made the attempt, it must be at the risk of his life, till such time at least as the ferment subside. A large accessible field was still before us, however, on the north of the Russian lines, peopled by Tartars characterised by much the same habits, moral and religious, with their countrymen in Naiman village; and as winter was fast approaching, it became a question, to which of them it would be best to proceed, now that we had visited all the villages hard by the colony. East of us, at the distance of two or three days journey, lay detachments of Getsan and Jambuluk Tartars, which had been repeatedly visited by Mr Galloway; and still farther east in Kislear steppe—the Trukmen. On the north, at much the same distance, were situated other detachments of Getsans and Jambuluks who had also been visited by Mr Galloway, and whose place of abode might be approached, we were told, by a route considerably west of the one he had been accustomed to take, and which, though more circuitous, was recommended, by the consideration that it would lead us through a number of Tartar villages; some of which had never been visited by the missionaries since the days of Mr Brunton. On considering all circumstances, we preferred an excursion to the last of these, for this, among other reasons, that I

could visit the eastern steppe south of the Cuma, without much additional travelling on my way back to Astrachan, whereas the tour to the north, while fully as convenient at present, did not possess the recommendation referred to, if delayed till the spring.

Tuesday, Nov. 20. In making our preparations yesterday, and the morning for the projected tour to the Jambuluks, our hopes of being able to realize it, were considerably damped on feeling that, instead of the mild weather of last week, during part of which the heat, in the midst of the day, was such as to make our great coats rather an incumbrance, there was now a piercing cold, which announced the setting in of winter in the north, and awakened our fears that it might be the forerunner of a storm. Judging it improper, however, to relinquish the idea of attempting the tour on account of an imaginary obstacle, which might or might not be realized, we resolved on proceeding to Sultan village, from which we could either retrace our steps, if met by a snow storm, or continue our course, if the weather proved favourable. Left the mission-house about half past three, and after taking a kind

of circuit past Naiman village, along the east and north-eastern base of Gilantow, crossed the Cuma, and reached Sultan village a little after sun-set. The family where Mr Galloway was wont to lodge, being particularly engaged, in preparing a feast to be held in remembrance of a child of the Sultan's who had died some time before, it was not convenient for them to perform the rites of hospitality; but the inconvenience that might otherwise have resulted from this circumstance, was obviated by the kindness of Cutel Oughle Mohammed Effendi, who received us politely, and entertained us in a style so nearly resembling that of Europeans, that, in as far as accommodation was concerned, we felt ourselves quite at home. Mohammed is considered as the most learned and sensible of the Effendis in this quarter. He reads Turkish with great ease, and is so much master of the language, as to be employed by the Priestoff Sultan to interpret and answer letters from the Turkish authorities, with whom he has occasion to do business. As he has sometimes been employed in the service of the commanding general in this quarter, he has had more intercourse with men of rank among the Russians, than any Effendi in the neighbourhood, and, consequently, has had better opportunities of being well informed on general subjects, and seems to take a deeper interest in them than most of his breth-

ren. He is a Circassian by birth, a ndunderstands the language of his countrymen well.

The news of the day naturally engaged our first attention, after the introductory civilities were over; and from the solicitude of the Effendi to learn whether there was any foundation for the rumours afloat in the neighbourhood, respecting certain hostile movements on the frontiers of Turkey, it was evident he took a particular interest in the fate of that empire. This became still more evident from the grave style in which he began to catechise us, in reference to the opinions entertained by Christians in the west respecting the time and manner of its overthrow—an event which he himself seemed to think was at no great distance. The truth is, the fall of the Turkish empire is classed, by the Mohammedan writers, among the signs of the near approach of the day of judgment; and although he affected to disregard the circular letter, issued by the fraternity at Mecca, as being a manifest imposition, it is not at all improbable, that the panic with which it struck the vulgar, in connection with the rumour alluded to, might have more influence than he was disposed to acknowledge, in giving an edge to his enquiries, political and religious, in reference to Turkey. In answer, we stated, that in the opinion of some very respectable writers, who

professed to be guided by the predictions of the sacred writers, the empire of Turkey would become weaker and weaker, like a man in a consumption, till it breathed its last; or dropping the figure, till it ceased to exist in its present form. From this, it was in my heart to give him a sketch of the opinions entertained by Christian expositors, respecting the darkness which overspread the Roman empire before the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, and then to glance at the manner in which that darkness had been in part, and would afterwards be totally, dispelled by the light of the gospel; in connection with the consequences to result from it, in the conversion of the whole world to the Christian faith. But as he exercised the privilege of asking questions in his own house, and did so in a manner that had a claim on our attention as men and Christians, we found it most eligible to allow the conversation to run in the channel marked out for it by the nature of the ground, and to watch our opportunity for introducing such remarks of our own, as, it struck us, might be for edification as well to the Effendi himself, as to servants and others who overheard us. The following is an abstract of the questions proposed by him, in reference to a subject, which I find is frequently in the mouths of the Tartars, viz. The character of

the persons who must go to hell at their death :—

Q. Do you suppose there is any class of men, in particular, who are certainly doomed to the punishment of hell?

A. By nature all are sinners, and consequently liable to the punishment of hell, unless they are brought to repentance; but we do not believe that there is any one tribe in particular, of whom it can be said that hell is to be their doom.

Q. What is a sinner?

A. A person who violates the law of God, in thought, word, or deed; and as none can plead guiltless at the bar of justice, the consequence is that all are sinners.

Q. Are there any particular individuals whom you take it upon you to doom to hell at their death, as being incorrigibly wicked?

A. We do not consider it as our province to judge of the destiny of any individual, by name, though we often have our fears; but as all are, by nature, sinners, and under the curse of the Divine law, we venture, from the word of God, to declare, with respect to such and such characters, that except they repent, it is impossible for them to escape the damnation of hell.

Having thus catechised us with a view to

ascertain our opinions, he proceeded to declare his own, by remarking, that they (the Mohammedans) presumed to judge of no man's state after his death, how wicked soever he might appear to be; because a person who had done many bad things known to men, might also have done many good things, of which they were ignorant, and which, being well known to God, might secure him favour, and save him from hell! In reply, we observed, that no good works, which it was in the power of sinful mortals to perform, could merit the Divine favour, or serve as an atonement for bad actions—that a man living in the open practice of sin, appeared to be on the open road to destruction—and that, as every man's state is fixed at death, there could be no hope of those whose minds, at that solemn hour, were "enmity against God." On hearing this remark, he admitted that living in sin was a rebellion against God, indicative of a heart so much at enmity with him, as to leave the sinner little to hope for, from any good deeds he might have done—though I have my fears, that he did not mean to be understood as renouncing the balancing system of Mohammedans, even in its application to those who die without experiencing a change of heart.

Meanwhile, it struck me, that our views of the merit of works of righteousness, performed by fallen man, might be exhibited with

sufficient perspicuity, by adverting to the opinions entertained on this subject, by contending parties in Europe, and that by following this plan, we might expose the weakness of the Mohammedan doctrines, on the question at issue, with less risk of kindling the indignation of our host, or of being bewildered in the mazes of his crude theology, than by attempting a professed refutation of his dogmas. We therefore proceeded to state, that differences of opinion prevailed among Effendis in Europe, as to the merit of works, just as differences of opinion obtained among them (the Mohammedans) on various questions connected with the religion of their founder; that some supposed themselves capable of performing services at pleasure, which were really meritorious in the sight of God; and that if they did so, they would of course bring in the Almighty as their debtor:—that others believed, that of themselves they could do nothing,—that their best works possessed no real merit, and that it was to the righteousness of Christ alone they were to look for justification and salvation:—that the Effendis who taught there was no intrinsic merit in good works, nevertheless exhorted their people most earnestly to practise them, enforcing their exhortations by all the arguments they could think of:—that on observing the effects produced by those opposite systems, on the minds of those who cordially embraced

them, it was found that, in point of fact, those who professed to renounce all confidence in good works, abounded most in the practice of them, whereas the conduct of those who contended they were meritorious, was, for the most part, at variance with their profession :— that our Lord had told us, that as a tree was known by its fruits, so were men known by their works, and sound or false doctrines by their effects; and that finding the faith of those who renounced all confidence in works, to be most productive in the fruits of righteousness, and the doctrine itself to be clearly revealed in the scriptures, we were not ashamed to acknowledge ourselves the disciples of this school, nor to recommend its doctrines to others.

To these statements, and to the remarks offered in illustration of them, the Effendi listened without stating any objections that took us much out of our road, and we therefore proceeded to state farther, that, disclaiming all confidence in good works, (though we still maintained them to be necessary) we made it our business to exhort men to trust in Christ, who had wrought out a perfect righteousness, and in doing so, had firm ground to go upon : for that Christ being a holy person, and fully qualified for his work, had yielded a perfect obedience to the Divine law. God had declared his acceptance of Christ's obedience, by raising

him from the dead, and, consequently, that when sinners are made partakers of his righteousness by faith, they had nothing to fear from the curse of the law, whereas those who trust in their own works, build on a foundation of sand, which can never be trusted; it being impossible for them to say, to the satisfaction of an awakened conscience, in what cases their works may be considered as sufficiently meritorious to entitle them to the favour of God, and rescue them from perdition.

In discoursing on these things, we endeavoured so to order our statements and explanatory remarks, as to obviate the objections which, we were aware, would occur as naturally to a Mohammedan, as to a Pelagian or a Roman Catholic, and concluded by remarking, that, as these are the doctrines of scripture, we taught them to all men, in the confidence that they were the truths of God. During the conversation, the countenance of the Effendi became more sedate and thoughtful; and from his looks and whole deportment, it struck my brother Mr Galloway, that he began to feel, in some measure, that the vaunted good works of sinful men, were just the foundation of sand which we described them to be, or, which amounts to much the same thing, that he betrayed a want of confidence in the soundness

of the principles with which he set out, and feared attempting a defence of them.

Nov. 3. The morning fair, but cold, and still threatening a storm. Resolved, however, to prosecute our journey, and made arrangements accordingly. After enquiring how we had rested, the Effendi put several questions, which led to a desultory conversation, respecting the coincidence of the conversion of the Jews, with the destruction of Antichrist. In the course of the conversation, he asked us what were the prevailing opinions among Christians respecting Antichrist? Who they supposed him to be? Who was to have the honour of destroying him? And in what manner was his destruction to be effected? In answer, we gave him a brief sketch of the opinions entertained by the expositors of Scripture prophecy, in as far as our information enabled us. Finding, from our account of the matter, that, by the term Antichrist, we did not mean any particular individual, but a system of corruption, managed by a succession of pretenders, influenced by a spirit of opposition to the truth as it is in Jesus; and that, while we believed he was to be destroyed by "the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming," we were nevertheless ignorant of the doctrines of the Coran upon the subject, or indisposed to give them credit;

he begged leave to state some particulars respecting the rise of Antichrist, his confinement, and his final destruction by the Messiah. Having signified our willingness to hear him, he told us, that Antichrist had appeared in the world so early as the time of their prophet Mohammed, who had seen him, and foreseeing that, if permitted to roam at large, he would do much mischief, had prayed the most High God to shut him up, so as to prevent him doing the mischief he intended,—that God, having been pleased to hear the prayer of Mohammed; caused a cloud to descend from heaven, in the midst of which, when divided or broken down into small portions, he was carried off to some unknown region in the east, the situation of which no man knew:—that in process of time, antichrist would escape from his confinement, to the great annoyance of the inhabitants of the earth, but would at last be checked in his career of wickedness by Messiah, who was to descend from heaven in person, near the white tower of Damascus, and kill him with his own hand. Of this account of the confinement and final destruction of Antichrist, we did not attempt a formal refutation, as we saw no good purpose to be answered by doing so—but took occasion, once more, to advert to the Antichrist whose rise and fall is foretold in the New Testament, to the conversion of the Jews, and the

universal diffusion of the Christian knowledge; and concluded, by remarking, that, while there were various questions respecting the time, and many other circumstances connected with the fulfilment of those predictions, about which the best Christians differed in opinion, without being, on that account, alienated from each other in heart, there was one point in which they all agreed, namely, that "without holiness no man could see the Lord," and that for this reason faithful Christian ministers, instead of spending too much time in discussing the questions above adverted to, made it their business to impress the hearts of their hearers with a sense of the necessity of coming to Christ, and thus securing their eternal salvation; well knowing, it would profit them little, that their opinions respecting the time and manner of the fulfilment of those predictions were correct, if their souls were lost, whereas if their souls were safe, a mistake on these points was of less consequence. To the truth of these practical hints, he assented, and the solemn air which we remarked in his countenance, towards the close of last night's conversation, once more took place of the sprightly ease which played in his looks, when rehearsing the adventures of Antichrist, and his destruction by the Messiah at the white tower of Damascus. Further we could not penetrate.

Called upon the Sultan, who received us courteously. Conversed with him a few minutes, on general subjects, and answered his desultory inquiries respecting the manners and customs of the English, of whom his knowledge is greater than could well have been anticipated in a man who, though chief among his brother Sultans, can scarcely read his own language. He had, however, been at Petersburg in his youth, where, from his hereditary dignity, and the rank he holds in the Russian service,* he had access to good company, and being a shrewd man, and apparently of an inquisitive turn of mind, his knowledge of the politics of Europe, and other common place topics, is considerable. As circumstances were not favourable for entering into a particular conversation with him on the subject of religion, we took our leave of his highness, who was pleased to say he was happy we had called—and by the time we reached our lodgings, John had the telega, &c. nearly ready for our departure. Having thanked the Effendi for his kind attention, we bid him good morning, about nine o'clock, and took the road for the Tartar villages on Cullish water, about thirty-five versts distant, in a direction nearly north

* The Sultan has the title and pay of a Russian General, and acts as Friestoff among the Tartars in this quarter.

by north-west. Dined in the open field, or steppe, about mid-day, on the margin of a small brook, the waters of which were clear as chrystal, but on tasting them, it was found they were brackish, and consequently ill suited for quenching our thirst; but as the day was cold, we felt the less inconvenience, and having refreshed ourselves on our travelling stores, we continued our course up a rising ground for a green tumulus; on reaching which, we were told by the sentinel on duty there, that we had missed our road, having followed a path which leads to a Russian village of the same name further east, instead of the one which leads to the Tartar villages to which we meant to proceed. The sentinel shewed us a cross road, however, by following which we might reach the one we had lost, without being under the necessity of retracing our steps. Following his directions, we reached a cardon of Cozaks, who pointed out the road we were in quest of, which we reached about three o'clock. A little before five, the Cullish villages, in number eight or ten, appeared in sight, at the distance of a few versts, beautifully situated on the north side of a pleasant valley, at the bottom of a declivity; the surface of which was adorned with herbage of the finest green I recollect of having seen, on such a large scale, since I left my native country.

Reached the village, just as the sun had

sunk below the horizon. Called on the Mirza, but found he was from home. His Conack-house, however, was open for us, and, in the course of a few minutes, we had the pleasure of seeing a blazing *ingle*, kindled by one of his retainers, composed of cakes of dry dung, and a few chips of wood, piled up for ventilation, in a style that would have done no dishonour to Count Rumford. While we were at tea, the Mirza returned from an excursion he had been making into a neighbouring village, and welcomed us to our lodgings. After tea, we entered into conversation with a respectable looking old man, who had taken his seat on a cake of dung near the fire. He told us he could not read, but understoood the Effendi had a copy of the New Testament, which, he was informed, contained a great many good things, blended, however, with things that were bad, and which, of course, ought to be guarded against. He could not tell us what the obnoxious doctrines were, nor did he seem to care much; it being sufficient for him to know, on the authority of the Effendi, that they were dangerous. Here we took occasion to inform him, that the book was from God, and that, so far from being dangerous, it contained truths of the utmost importance for every man to know, but that many condemned it because they disliked its doctrines, and could not bear the plainness with

which it reproved their bad qualities, &c. For example, it declared that, by nature, all men were sinners—that in their conduct they acted the part of rebels against God,—that they were doomed to misery, on account of their sins, and could do nothing for their deliverance, and consequently were on the verge of destruction; that, on account of these and many other truths, there were multitudes in all ages who conceived a dislike at the book, but in so doing, they acted very foolishly, as these were things which it was of the greatest consequence for them to know and believe, and the rather, that the same book made known to men a Saviour, who was able to save them from misery, and bring them to happiness. We added, that the name of this Saviour was Jesus. Jesus! replied the old man; and who is Jesus? I never heard of him before. We answered that Jesus was the Messiah, of whom he must have heard, who was promised to the prophets and others in ancient times, and asked if he had any wish to hear concerning him. He said that he had; which encouraged us to mention a few plain things about the names of Jesus, and his ability to save. When discoursing on the character of Jesus, and adverting to the glory of his person as being Immanuel God with us, a student who was present, began to mutter some things in the ears of the other Tartars who had assembled in the

Conack-house, with a view to dissuade them from listening—such as, What could Jesus do for their deliverance? And by a little manœuvering, he succeeded in persuading all of them to withdraw, save the old man, who still maintained his position, and being willing to hear, we gave him a historical sketch of the life and death of Christ, as being more level to his capacity, in the first instance, than an abstract disquisition on the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, shewing him, as we went on, that the same dislike to the truth, which led men to condemn the book *now*, had led the Jews, in former times, to reject the Saviour, and cry out, Crucify him, crucify him! Nor did we neglect telling him the design of Christ's death, and the efficacy of his blood in cleansing the soul from sin. After listening, for a time, with apparent interest, the old man broke silence, and averred that these were very good things. Yes! it was surely a very excellent thing in Jesus to do such things for men. On observing the looks, and hearing the acknowledgements, of this plain unlettered villager, we remarked to each other, that if he had not the opposition of the Effendis, and the scorn of the multitude to encounter, hopes might be entertained that he would, without much gainsaying, submit to be instructed in the doctrines of the cross, and though our hopes were not sanguine, we felt refreshed, after our ride,

by the idea that probably some good might have been done, and were prepared to speak with greater boldness in the name of Jesus.

Meanwhile the old man retired, and the student returned from the pious work of sending the other villagers to their respective homes, lest they should be infected with our pestilential doctrines, and with a determined look, demanded of Mr Galloway why we gave the name Rabb (Lord) to the Messiah. It was answered, because he is our Master,* a teacher come from God, and our king, to whom we yielded the obedience of willing subjects. When Mr Galloway was proceeding to explain our views more at length, the student interrupted him by vociferating, with a sarcastic tone, which it would not be easy to imitate, How can Christ save from sin? Judging it better to answer this query, than prosecute the discussion about the meaning of the Arabic word *rabb*, in its application to the Messiah, we endeavoured to do so with all the plainness and

* Rabb (or Rabbi) is an Arabic word, from the same root with the Hebrew or Syriac word Rabbi, so often applied to our Lord, and other teachers, in the New Testament. Among classic Arabic writers, it is often used in much the same sense as it is by the Evangelists; but as it seems to be applied by the Mohammedans, in this quarter, almost exclusively to the Supreme Being, they consider the application of it to the Messiah, as blasphemy.

force of evidence in our power; but found it impracticable to make the remarks bear on his refractory soul; as Mr Galloway was scarcely allowed to finish half a sentence at a time, without being interrupted by some new question, or stopt short by some new objection. I then requested Mr Galloway to tell him, that if he really wished to know how Christ Jesus saved his people from their sins, it was necessary for him to pause till we had told him a few particulars in their order, after which we should hear his objections, otherwise it was impossible for us to make him understand any thing on the subject. Having signified his willingness to follow this order, we explained to him the doctrines of Scripture respecting the manner in which sinners are saved from the guilt of sin by faith in the atonement of Christ, and from its pollutions by the influence of his Spirit After hearing thus far, in silence, he introduced a question which, so far as I can recollect, was the only one proposed by him which had the appearance of being the result of sober reflection. It was this: How could the offering made by Christ be an atonement for the sins of all that were to be saved? for those who lived before he came into the world, for those who were alive at his death, and for those who should believe in him to the end of time? We answered, it was on account of the infinite value of the sacrifice which he offered. The

Messiah was named Immanuel, God with us, —he gave his life a ransom for many—for all that should believe in him—and the Father having accepted of his offering, it was, by consequence, effectual for securing their eternal salvation. Availing himself of our promise to hear and answer his questions, he asked us farther, How could Christ atone for the sins of others, when he was a sinner himself? We denied the assumption on which the objection implied in the question, was founded, assuring him that the Scriptures, which were the word of God, declared explicitly that he had no sin, reminding him, at the same time, of the doctrine of their own Effendis, who contend that certain of the ancient prophets, and, among others, the Messiah, were altogether free from it. On being convicted of ignorance of his own system, the fierceness of his speech and looks underwent a considerable abatement; instead of the air of defiance with which he approached the field, we could observe a disposition to pay some little deference to the statements of his antagonists; and though, at its commencement, our interview had much the appearance of a pitched battle, yet, towards its close, it assumed the aspect of a friendly conversation, and, of course, afforded greater facilities for giving him a view of the truth as it is in Jesus, which we endeavoured to improve to the best advantage.

Nov. 4. 'On awaking from sleep, a little before day-break, I overheard Mr Galloway and John in conversation with each other respecting the intensity of the cold, which they felt much more than I did, in consequence of not having provided themselves with a blanket, but trusted to their shubes, which, though an excellent contrivance for resisting the cold by night or by day, would have required an appendage in the Conack-house, in the clay-coated wattled walls of which, the chinks were sufficiently large to suffer the light, and consequently the wind, to penetrate, while a chimney, of spacious diameter, served the double purpose of a conductor to the cold of the atmosphere from above, and of an outlet for the heat which had been diffused throughout our tenement by the fire at which we had warmed ourselves before going to bed.

After breakfast, were visited by several of the Tartars who had heard of the arrival of missionaries at the Conack-house. One of them read part of the third chapter of John's gospel, from which we took occasion to ask him what he supposed might be meant by the new birth. His answer was more satisfactory than was anticipated. "The new birth is a change of heart, in consequence of which it becomes more pure." The means he recommended for attaining it, however, were quite of the Mohammedan stamp—fasting and pray-

er, and particularly a pilgrimage to Mecca, which he seemed to consider as a kind of specific. Having heard his account of the matter, we proceeded to give him a view of the manner in which the heart is cleansed through the blood and Spirit of Christ, but had scarcely begun when he affected to have business which required his attention elsewhere, and retired.

Having been informed there was an Effendi hard by, we took the liberty of calling at his house, but found he was from home. Took a walk thence along the north of the Cullish water, in quest of another Effendi at some distance, who, we understood, was a man of consequence in his profession, and a theological tutor. In our progress, were met by four young men, who entered into conversation with us, and on seeing a copy of the New Testament, enquired very particularly what the cost of it might be, and how we came to put ourselves to the trouble and expence of travelling about with such books, and giving them away for nothing. We told them, the friends of truth, in our country, had found unspeakable advantage from the perusal of the Testament, and understanding that they, and many others in different quarters of the earth, were destitute of it, and ignorant of the salvation which it had revealed, had associated together, for the purpose of bearing the expence, and

that in so doing, they were influenced by the highest and purest motives—love to the souls of men, and a desire to promote the glory of God. From discoursing about the way the book had been sent to them, we proceeded to speak of the contents of it, and of the importance of the knowledge of them, in order to the enjoyment of eternal life. One of them replied, that the institutions of the New Testament were now abolished, and that the book itself was obsolete. We assured them, that in this they had been misinformed, as the doctrines and ordinances of Jesus Christ were still in force, and would continue so till the end of the world: and as they seemed disposed to hear what we had to say about a religion which, among their countrymen, "was every where spoken against," we gave them a short account of some of the leading truths of the gospel respecting our glorious Redeemer, and the way of life and salvation through his mediation.

At the breaking up of the conversation, found, that the Effendi's house was still at a great distance, and as a dark cloud, which overhung the horizon, began to distil some drops of rain, it struck us, it would be more eligible to return to our quarters, where it was probable some of the Tartars might be waiting for us, and to visit him, if circumstances permitted, in the afternoon. On our

way back to the Conack-house, we noticed some Tartar women in conversation with each other, one of whom recognised Mr Galloway, and seemed remarkably happy to see him. She was from Naiman village, and had a particular respect for the missionaries, in consequence of having derived much benefit from some medicines she had received from Mr Paterson, to which, indeed, she adverted in speaking to my friend, to whom it occurred, she was very probably the person who, in the opinion of herself and neighbours, had been possessed by the devil, who kept his habitation in defiance of the prayers of the Effendis, the reading of the Coran, &c. till he was at length dislodged by some medicines given her by Mr Paterson, who, of course, got the credit of casting him out. In this, however, he was mistaken, but the mistake led him to mention this curious circumstance, and gave occasion to several remarks respecting the popular opinions entertained in this part of the country in reference to demoniacs, and the means adopted by the Effendis for the cure. For the benefits received by herself and her neighbours from the attention of the missionaries, the woman seemed to be really thankful in her own way, yet it was painful to observe what a powerful hold the prejudices of her country still had of her mind; for no sooner had we turned our backs, than Mr Galloway overheard her whispering

to the bystanders, "The missionaries are very kind obliging neighbours, but dangerous people, as they make it their business to speak against the prophet."

Before reaching our lodgings, Mr Galloway was accosted by a person who had seen him before in the village, and having accepted an invitation to call at his house, we found it nearly full of a company of jovial Tartars, making themselves merry with boza, a kind of fermented liquor made from millet, and bearing a distant resemblance to ale, like which, when taken in large quantities, it ascends into the upper story, and makes them talkative. Our host, a sober decent-looking man, shewed us to a seat, and the circumstance of my being a stranger in the country, led to a number of questions and answers, which Mr Galloway so managed as to make them bear upon the design of our visit, but found it extremely difficult to secure their attention, as sometimes a number of them bawled out at once, each with a question of his own,—one demanding why Christians eat swine's flesh, another why they call Messiah Rabb, &c. in such a tumultuous manner, that the idea of bringing them to listen to a discourse, seemed hopeless. At length, however, Mr Galloway succeeded in securing attention for perhaps six or eight minutes, after which they resumed their former plan of interrupting him, by proposing im

pertinent or curious questions. From one of these, however, namely, Who was to destroy Antichrist? we took occasion to say a few things about the gospel of Christ, which, we told them, was to be the chief instrument of his destruction; endeavouring, at the same time, to correct their mistaken notions respecting him. Some of them, we had reason to think, would have listened to us willingly, had we thought it eligible to prolong our visit, but the hearts of the greater part of them were fixed on something else; and as our situation was nearly as unfavourable for religious instruction, as an alehouse would be in our native country, we brought our remarks to a close, and having taken our leave of them, returned to the Conack-house. Found there were none of the Tartars in waiting at our lodgings, and but few of them to be seen out of doors. It appeared, indeed, that, in several respects, circumstances were much less favourable for collecting an audience than was anticipated. A great part of the villagers, we understood, were at a fair in Alexandrofskie, about thirty-five versts distant, while others were engaged with their hay, which, after having allowed it to stand in the field, in the surrounding country, till the labours of harvest were over, they were bringing to the villages before winter set in. Add to this, that the weather being cold, and the day wettish, there was no inducement

for such as were disengaged to collect on the green beside the Conack-house, where we might have made up to them, and drawn them into conversation. Consequently it was only by calling at their houses, or taking a turn through the villages, that we could expect to find an opportunity of conversing with them.

After dinner, accordingly, we got our kibitki ready for taking a ride to the house of Jafer Effendi, but had proceeded only a short way, when some of the villagers called out to us, as we passed along, "Have you got any thing to sell?" Come here, said Mr Galloway, and I will shew you something. Instantly, two or three of them were at our elbow, and, to make his promise good, Mr Galloway shewed them a copy of the New Testament, recommending it to them as a book which shewed them the way of salvation. In conversing with them at greater length, we assumed the principle, that all men were naturally fond of happiness, and as they at once admitted the truth of the maxim, we thence took occasion to shew them there was only one way in which this desire could be gratified, viz. by taking the word of God for their guide. Our audience increased as we proceeded to tell them, that this was the way in which all the patriarchs and prophets had sought for happiness, and found it, and that the disciples of

Christ followed the same path that had been pursued by the faithful in former times. In the course of a few minutes, our kibitki was, in a manner, surrounded with applicants for books, and others who had come to the spot to see what was going on.

Had we been disposed to give a Testament to every petitioner, we might soon have disposed of all that we had brought along with us; but experience had taught my brethren to proceed with the utmost caution, in discharging the important trust reposed in them, by the generosity of the Christian public. Free of suspicion, they had, for a time, been in the habit of giving a copy to every person who could read, and was willing to receive it, nay, they even urged them to accept of it, and thought that, in so doing, they had been instrumental in putting the word of God into the hands of their fellow-mortals, whom curiosity, in the absence of higher principles, might lead to glance at its contents, and whose hearts might thus be touched with the views it gave them of their need of the Saviour, and of the suitableness of his salvation to their circumstances. But finding, to their no small grief and astonishment, that not a few of the Mohammedans made it their business to ask Testaments, without the remotest intention of reading them, and, so far as could be ascertained, for the sole purpose of providing them-

selves, at an easy rate, with covers for the Coran and other books, recommended by their teachers; while the sacred volume, which they had promised to read, was destroyed or thrown aside as waste paper; they altered their plan, and now they seldom give away a copy of the Testament, till, by sounding the petitioner respecting his views, or inquiring into his character, they obtain some faint evidence that he really intends to peruse it—with a promise, if the case seem to require it, that he will on no account destroy the word of God. In distributing tracts, they are, for obvious reasons, less scrupulous. On the present occasion, Mr Galloway proceeded with his usual caution. Among others, there was a young lad who could, with difficulty, read a few simple sentences from a scripture catechism, which was put into his hand to ascertain what he could do. He laid the catechism past, and said he would have a copy of the New Testament. We asked him for what purpose, as he could not read it? He replied, he would use it as a school-book, but with looks and gestures which betrayed a consciousness that he had some other end in view. Mr Galloway told him, if he wished to use it as a school-book, the catechism was much better for him, in the first instance, and if he made a good use of it, he might have a Testament afterwards. He refused, however, to take a

catechism, or any other small books, keeping his eye fixed on the neat binding of the Testament. In these circumstances, Mr Galloway felt constrained to say him, *nay*, there being little room to doubt that it was the cover of the book, and not the contents of it, that he wished to be possessed of.

Having disposed of this case, we continued our discourse, on the public road, respecting the character and work of the Messiah, till an advanced student, who, in the absence of his master, affected to have some authority over the crowd, took it upon him to drive them away forcibly with a kind of cudgel or large stick, in a playful style, which the honest peasants in Scotland would have pronounced to be half joke half earnest. Having finished his business, he returned to the kibitki, in a vainglorious manner, the language of which seemed to be, "You see, gentlemen, that I am a man of some consequence here." We remonstrated with him on the wickedness of his conduct, in that he would neither receive the gospel himself, nor suffer others to listen to it. He was not ignorant, we told him, that the Testament was from God, and therefore we warned him that he must give an account of his conduct to the Judge of all the earth, and bear the blame, if those whom he had driven away from hearing the gospel perished in their sins. He left us without seeming to pay much

attention to our reproofs, but we had not proceeded a quarter of a mile, till he overtook us, almost out of breath, and having sprung up and secured a seat on the side of the kibitki, asked our forgiveness, if we thought that he had said any thing amiss. We told him, that he had our forgiveness, but reminded him that it behoved him to ask forgiveness of God, whom he had offended by his levity and wickedness—taking occasion, from his professed penitence, to give him such admonitions as, it struck us, might be useful.

Reached the house of the Effendi, who, on hearing that strangers wished to see him, made his appearance with a number of students and others whom curiosity brought to the spot. As he did not invite us to light from our kibitki, we entered into conversation, on the public road, in presence of a considerable number of the villagers. In these circumstances, the Effendi felt himself bound in honour, I suppose, to attempt a respectable defence of the tenets which, in his prelections and other discourses, he recommended as the truths of God; and throughout the whole of the interview, assumed the air, and spoke in the style, of a master. The following is the sum of what past on the subject of religion.—

Missionaries.—Well, Effendi, you have no doubt heard of the Angile now in circulation

among your countrymen: have you had an opportunity of reading it?

Effendi.—I have read part of it.

M. How do you like it?

E. The book is of no use, as the Coran contains every thing which it is necessary for us to know.

M. How, of no use! you believe that Moses and Christ were true prophets; and is it not an interesting thing to learn how true believers worshipped God in former times?

E. The Coran contains every thing concerning their worship, that deserves to be remembered.

M. There is no doubt the Coran contains many allusions to the institutions of Moses and of Jesus Christ, but by no means so distinct and full accounts as are contained in our Scriptures.

E. The books in your hands do not contain a just account of the former dispensations. They are replete with errors. They are not the books that were given by God to his people, and therefore are not to be trusted.

M. At present there is not time to enter into a full discussion of this question, but we can prove that the Old Testament, now in our possession, is the same with the Scriptures in the hands of the Jews before the coming of Christ, who acknowledged them to be genuine;

and that the New Testament, in like manner, is the same that was universally received by true believers for centuries before the coming of Mohammed, and consequently we have the fullest evidence of their authenticity.

E. The Messiah was indeed a true prophet, sent by God to reclaim the world, but the people would not hear him; and as he had failed in his enterprise, God saw it meet to send Mohammed as his successor, and to him all should be obedient. In these circumstances, how can you expect that we should come to Christ for salvation, after having embraced the religion of the great prophet of God, Mohammed?

M. It is true that few of Christ's countrymen received him, but this is just what had been predicted by the prophets long before he appeared; and by them it was also predicted, that the Jews should, all of them, in due time embrace his religion, and trust in him for salvation: and as for the Gentiles, so far from not receiving him, multitudes of them embraced his religion in the primitive ages; and we are assured by the word of God, that the time is coming when "all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord."

E. Is it not written in your books, that, when about to ascend into heaven, Christ foretold that another prophet should appear, whom all were to receive and obey, and that,

in process of time, he should descend from heaven, acknowledge Mohammed to be a true prophet, and embrace his religion ?*

* In answer to this and similar questions, we sometimes tell the Mohammedans, that so far from any intimation being given in the Angile of the coming of another prophet, with a new dispensation of religion, a curse is pronounced against the man or the angel that should preach any other Gospel than that which Christ commanded his apostles to preach for the salvation of man, and probably this might be mentioned to the Effendi, though, as it is not noted in the memorandum book, I am uncertain. But in reasoning with men who deny the authenticity of our Scriptures, this argument may, in some cases, tend more to confirm than to remove suspicion. Those who assume it as a matter of fact, that Christians have expunged the prediction respecting the coming of Mohammed, have only to assume farther, (which is easily done) that to make sure work of it, they at the same time inserted the damnatory clauses, to keep their posterity in perpetual darkness. For if Christians were wicked enough to expunge what God had commanded to be written, it cannot be supposed they would scruple to insert a few clauses of their own, to make every thing smooth. In a conversation we had with another Effendi, a few days ago, it was accordingly thought advisable to refute the assumption, on a different ground, by shewing that if the true Angile had ever contained such a prediction, there must have been a general expectation of the fulfilment of it among the primitive Christians, in the same manner that, among the Jews, there was a general expectation of the Messiah. Among Christians, however, no such expectation ever existed. The dispensation of religion given them by their Master, was, from the beginning, considered as the *last* that was to be given by God for the guidance of his people, and destined to continue till his second coming. But the universal prevalence of the belief that Christ was to have no succes-

M. There is nothing of the kind in our books—nothing about the coming of another prophet to whom the nations are to be obedient; and as for the descending of Christ from heaven, the account given in Scripture is, that as he once died for sin, so "to them that look for him, he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

E. Moses was a true prophet, and the law of Moses was from God. In like manner the Psalms and the Angile came from God. All this you acknowledge. Tell me, do you also acknowledge that the Coran is from God?

M. If we had the same evidence of its having come from God, that we have of the divine original of the Law and the Gospel, we should instantly acknowledge it to be from God; but after seeking evidence to this effect, we can find none.*

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sor, is altogether incompatible with the supposition that the true Angile contained any prediction respecting the coming of Mohammed as the successor of Jesus Christ, and consequently we are authorised to conclude, that the assertions of Mohammedans on this subject, are founded on delusion. Respecting the opinion of Mohammedans on this point, see Sale's Coran prel. discourse.

* This evasive answer was given on purpose that his students might have no pretext for shutting their ears against what might afterwards be said. Had we told them point blank, that we disbelieved the Coran, the first thought that occurred to them would, in all probability, have been, They are infidels, and speak blasphemy, why hear them farther?

E. If you or any other man will produce two chapters equal in sublimity to two chapters I can point out in the Coran, I will give up my faith in the Mohommedan religion immediately, and persuade the students to follow my example. (Evident symptoms of exultation in their books.)

M. We are neither prophets, nor do we pretend to the gift of prophecy as Mohammed did, but would beg leave to remark, that the finest parts of the Coran has been taken from our Scriptures.

E. What I wish is, that you produce two such chapters as I can do from the Coran.

M. We undertake to produce from our Scriptures, specimens of sublimity equal to any thing to be found in the Coran; but as for producing two such chapters of our own composition, or that of our friends, it is, from the nature of the case, altogether out of the question. The language of the Coran is Arabic, in which we do not profess ourselves qualified to write. You maintain it impossible to do justice to the sublimity of the Coran, in another language. We may allege the same in reference to the language of our Scriptures. Consequently none are qualified to institute the comparison, but such as are complete masters of Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic—an ac-

complishment to which neither you nor we can pretend to lay claim.

E. I refer to the sentiments and doctrines, as well as to the language.*

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* Even with this modification, how unsatisfactory the evidence of the divine original of the Coran! admitting, for the sake of argument, that its sublimity, if not unrivalled, has never been surpassed. What a slender foundation for the hundreds of millions to build their faith upon, who have embraced the Coran as the only authentic revelation of the will of God! Where is there a finer specimen of the sublime, than that which is quoted from Moses by Longinus, "And God said, Let there be light, and there was light." The language indeed is simple, but the sentiment is unrivalled by any thing that ever dropped from the pen of philosophers or poets, in reference to the creation of the universe. Yet, on supposition there were no other evidence of his divine mission than the sublimity of this and other parts of his writings, who could take it upon him thence to infer, that they were dictated by the inspiration of the Almighty? Sublimity of language or sentiment may strengthen the conviction produced by other evidence, that a book is from God; but of itself is by far too delicate an idea to have its merits appreciated by more than one in a hundred of those whose eternal welfare is involved in the truth or falsehood of its contents. On a comparison with the phantom, on which the impostor of Mecca rested his claims, as the prophet of God, how satisfactory was the evidence exhibited to the senses, and impressed on the hearts and consciences of his hearers, by Him who spake as never man spake! "Then Jesus answered and said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And

M. Still we are prepared to enter the lists, when a favourable opportunity offers; but remember that in judging of the claims of books, which profess to be a revelation from God re-

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blessed is he whosoever is not offended in me."* "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles except God be with him."† "But I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me."‡ "Then gathered the chief priests and Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him."§ The argument of the Mohammedans, considered as having been put into the mouth of their founder by God, becomes still more suspicious, when it is remembered that, according to him, the Coran was not intended for the Arabs alone, but for men of every language under heaven. How improbable that God, who is "merciful and wise," should have withheld from a prophet of Mohammed's pretensions, the proofs of his divine legation, with which his predecessors were furnished, and left him to rest the whole fabric on a kind of evidence which, apart from other people, is far from being conclusive to men of the most cultivated mind, and altogether beyond the investigation of almost any but a few interested individuals who understand the Arabic language.

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* Luke vii. 22, 23. † John iii. 1, 2. ‡ John v. 36, 37. § John xi. 47, 48.

specting the way of salvation, the proper question is not, which of them is the most sublime in the style of its composition, but which of them produces the strongest evidence that it has been dictated by the inspiration of the Almighty, and that its contents are suited to the necessities of those to whom it is given. In neither of these respects is the Coran to be compared with the Bible. We have sought evidence of the inspiration of its author, but can find none. We have asked its admirers again and again, but asked them in vain, to shew us, from any thing contained in it, how sinners are to be justified in the sight of God, and saved from the wrath to come.

By the time we had proceeded thus far in the discussion, night had begun to set in, and as we had a couple of versts to travel to our lodgings, and rather an awkward road, we found it necessary to draw the conversation to a close; at which, we have reason to think, the Effendi was not at all displeased, for though he still talked of the sublimity of the Coran, and affected to have the fullest confidence in the goodness of his cause, it was obvious he had no wish to come to close quarters, in presence of the students, by bringing the question to the touchstone, which we proposed. When about to take our leave of him, however, he again averred his willingness to discuss the subject when it suited our conveni-

ence; and on our part, we assured him we were prepared to abide the result of a candid investigation, but reminded him, that with us mere assertion would go for nothing. We must have evidence to rest our faith upon, before we could subscribe to the divine original of the Coran. We had incontrovertible evidence, we told him, that our religion had come from God; and till evidence was produced that it had been superseded by another, we must adhere to it.

In the course of the evening, conversed with the Mirza's servants, who listened to us with some degree of attention. The Mirza is from home on business, consequently we have not an opportunity of conversing with him on the objects of our mission.

Nov. 5. Left the Conack-house about half-past eight, and took the road for the villages near the head of the Clous water, which are situated about forty vests north-west of the Cullish.

When ascending the Cullish water, we observed a great many plots of land on both sides of it, which had been in crop last summer, and the appearance of the stubble seemed to corroborate the popular statements respecting the fertility of the soil. Such parts of the ground, as had been in crop last summer but one, were overgrown with large weeds, most of

them five or six, and many of them seven or eight feet high. Their bushy tops were supported by a large stem, which gave them such a shewy appearance, that, on a cursory view at a small distance, the fields might have passed for so many young plantations. In consequence of the luxuriance of these weeds, there is almost no grass on the land for at least one summer after it has been in crop, and it is not till after the lapse of several years, that it masters them so as to be considered good pasturage. Toward the summit of the contiguous ridges on both hands, as also around the sources of the rivulet, twenty versts or more from the villages, there were large tracts of land which had been appropriated for raising hay, of which there was an excellent shew. After tracing the rivulet to its source, we made for an opening in the mountain ridge on our right, beyond which, we understood the Clous villages were situated. As we approached the opening, an immense plain burst on our view, extending from the base of the mountain as far as the eye could reach. It was part of the great Calmuc steppe. Near the bottom of the mountain range, the rivulet from which the villages take their name, winds its way in its progress to the north-east. The villages are situated on its banks, and had a fine effect as we descended the mountain range, by a serpentine course, which reminded me of

the old road down Erikstane Brae, in Dumfries-shire; but the adjacent steppe furnished but a poor substitute for the vale of Anandale, unless its vastness, resembling that of the ocean, be considered, by the admirers of the sublime, as more than sufficient to compensate for the want of more useful qualities.

Reached one of the villages about half an hour before sun-set, and were much struck, on entering it, with the miserable appearance of the tenements of its inhabitants. Some of them, as is customary in these quarters, had been plastered with dung, and others with clay, or a mixture of them which having yielded to the weather, shewed the bare wattling; while the whole of their appurtenances presented a picture of abject poverty and shameful sloth, combined in such a manner as to make the sight repulsive. Called at the house for Seid Effendi, with whom Mr Galloway had the honour of being acquainted, but found he was from home. From his house, we proceeded to that of the Mirza, who was also from home. Asked some of his retainers, if we could be furnished with lodgings in the village. It was answered they knew of none. The Conack-house having gone into disrepair, had been taken down, and though the wattle-work of the new one was nearly finished, its walls were yet to plaster. There was another village not more than a couple of versts distant, but the sun was going

down, and as we knew of no person to ask for, it struck us, that nothing was to be gained by leaving the one we were in. At length, however, when looking around us, and talking with the natives, at a loss what to think or do, one of the families generously offered us their habitation; proposing to put themselves up, for the night, with some of their neighbours. It was a kind of Tartar tent, covered with felt instead of canvas, and in such a state of decay, that it could scarcely be expected to survive above a winter or two. On the outside, it was far from inviting, and Mr Galloway exclaimed, the inside is worse, while John was of opinion that it was utterly unfit for our accommodation; contrasting it, in his own mind, perhaps, with the mission-house at Astrachan. So far as appeared, however, it was the best to be had; for though there was a new tenhard by, it was occupied by the Mirza's lady and suit, of whom it would have been both unmannerly and cruel to have asked it for our lodgings—though the certainty of a refusal had been out of the question. The poor people were willing to leave their tents for us—for strangers whom they had never seen before; nay, for gewars (infidels); and what could we expect more? I began to feel happy that we had reached the place before night set in, for bad as it appeared to be, it was better than passing the night out of doors. While I was

indulging in these and similar reflections, the good people were busy in cleaning the tent of lumber, and sweeping out the filth and dirt to make it as comfortable as possible. This was no sooner done than I was asked to step into it, and see how it would do. It was indeed a miserable hovel, but fearing, from the description John had just been giving, and the repugnance he seemed to feel at the idea of accepting it, that it would be much worse, I felt satisfied, and may add, thankful, I trust, for the accommodation which it promised us; remembering how it had often fared with our Master, who had reason to say, "the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

In the middle of the tent, was a fire right below an opening in the roof, which served for an outlet to the smoke. The diameter of the place on the floor, was about fourteen feet. The lower part of it, to the height of two or three feet, was protected on the outside by wattling, which, in its day, had been plastered with dung; patches of which were still visible, though in such a tattered state as to be next to useless. The top of the covering was supported by a kind of frame made of hoops or wands, at the distance from each other of perhaps four or five inches. Their colour was jet black, and glossy like that of the rafters of the

old Scotch houses, in parts of the country where the fuel in common use, is peat, and the fire upon the hearth. Some mouse traps which I have seen, with a hole in the top, would furnish a pretty exact model of the whole apparatus in miniature, if they wanted the pointed wires intended to prevent the escape of the captives. By the time I had finished my observations, I felt the sweat begin to break, in consequence of the heat diffused through the place by the fire upon the hearth, which, to be sure, was felt the more that I had not laid aside my shube.

On returning to the kibitki, beside which Mr Galloway was in conversation with some of the natives, I observed a traveller riding up to us, whom my friend instantly recognised to be an Armenian merchant of his acquaintance, and who, on reaching the spot, expressed the happiness he felt at seeing us, told us he lived in the village, and invited us to his lodgings. Thankfully we accepted his invitation, and having given the Mirza's people a small trifle for the trouble to which they had put themselves on our account, we accompanied him to his quarters, which we found to be in a zemlinka—a kind of dwelling place which, as its name imports, is partly under ground, like the under stories of the houses in the New Town of Edinburgh. The floor of the one in which we have the honour to be

lodged, is about five feet below the level of the contiguous surface, on which the beams rest by which the roof is supported. It may embrace an area of forty or fifty feet by sixteen. At present, the one end of it serves as a stall for two favourite horses; the other as lodgings to our host and his guests. In summer, it is used as a cellar, in which he deposits various articles of merchandise, and, among others, large quantities of butter, which, after purchasing from the Tartars, he sends to the Crimea, to be thence forwarded to Constantinople. The roof is covered with brushwood, straw, &c. over which, to make all sure, there is a thick coating of earth.

As a whole, the zemlinka had little about it that was inviting; yet it was superior, in various respects, to the tattered hut in which we had the prospect of passing the night, when the Armenian picked us up; and the hearty welcome with which we were received, made every thing smooth and agreeable, especially as an order given his servant to get a couple of chickens ready immediately for supper, made it evident that he meant to perform the rites of hospitality with cheerfulness.

Soon after our arrival, a number of Tartars collected in the zemlinka, and took their seats *sans ceremonie*, it being customary among them (and the same custom obtains among the Russians) to introduce themselves without

knocking at the door, as we do in Britain; and as all were made welcome that wished to hear us, no explanation was necessary. Mr Galloway introduced himself to their attention, by some remarks on the prevalence of misery in the world, and asked how it fared with them. There is no doubt much misery in the world, was the reply, and we have our own share of it. To this the following questions and answers succeeded:

Missionaries.—Do you know of any way of deliverance from misery?

Tartars.—God is able to deliver us.

M. True: but have you any information whether God is willing to deliver you?

T. This is known to God only.

M. God has revealed his will in the sacred writings, from which we are happy to have it in our power to tell you, that He is willing to save you and all men from misery; provided you and they are willing to receive deliverance in the way in which he is pleased to give it.

On hearing of the Scriptures, one of the most forward of the party bawled out, in the thoughtless blustering style of an ignoramus who had little hope, and few fears, "There is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet. In this we believe; for those who believe this, there is salvation; we wish to have no more

information respecting the way of deliverance from misery, nor is it necessary." Aware that little was to be expected, as matters then stood, from attacking their strong hold by argument, we endeavoured, by various manœuvres, to bring them into the open field, in the hope that the conversation might perhaps be so managed, as to afford us an opportunity of giving them some useful instructions, but our endeavours were in vain. Sometimes their movements encouraged the hope, that they might be induced to quit the hold, but the moment they perceived the tendency of our remarks to lead them off from the prophet, they took the alarm, and having secured their retreat, vociferated again and again, "there is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet." The truth is, most of them had come from a marriage feast, where, as the Armenian suspected, they had quaffed more than enough of Boza,* by which there mind was thrown into a kind of boisterous frenzy, which very much

* In this quarter, conscientious Mohammedans abstain from wine, and till within these few years, from ardent spirits, as having been forbidden by the prophet; but as it has lately been discovered by the Cabardians, that though wine is forbidden in the Coran, yet brandy is permitted, I have seen the latter accepted, when the former was refused for conscience sake. I understand, however, that drunkenness is not a prevailing vice among the Mohammedans in Russia.

indisposed them for listening to the dictates of pure and undefiled religion, while, at the same time, it fired their zeal for the honour of their favourite prophet Mohammed. In these circumstances, the proverb seemed to be applicable, "cast not your pearls before swine;" and, therefore, instead of urging them to hear us further, we suffered the conversation to turn into another channel, till most of them had retired.

Meanwhile a middle aged man, of whom the Armenian holds the zemlinka, took his seat beside Mr Galloway, and entered into conversation with him respecting the concerns of eternity. As he listened with attention, and, judging from appearances, with considerable interest, we made it our business to improve our time in speaking to him; and in order that his attention might be kept up, varied the mode of address from that of a continued discourse, to the plan of speaking by an interpreter; in which I was assisted first by Mr Galloway, and afterwards by John, who feels little difficulty in explaining the ideas in Tartar, whenever we succeed in making him catch the meaning of the English sentences given out for interpretation; but as his knowledge of the English is comparatively imperfect, considerable practice will be necessary, in order to his being able to do justice to the subject, in

an argument where accurate conceptions, and great power of language, are indispensible.

Nov. 6. There being no fire in the zemlinka, nor any place for making one, the proprietor of the premises invited us into his house, where we took our seat by the fireside, and had an opportunity of observing the process of making Calmuc tea, which was recommended by acclamation, as being much more wholesome, and, in all respects, better than that which is in use among the Russians and other Europeans. To Mr Galloway it was no new thing, and as I had no wish to be singular, I declared for it like the rest of the company; and with the greater cheerfulness, that I understood from Mr Galloway, that when on a journey, he found it to be more refreshing and strengthening than ours. The Calmuc tea is baked into cakes, which, judging from the specimens I have seen, are about the size of the boards of a folio volume in length and breadth, and nearly an inch in thickness. It is cut down into small parings, and boiled for about half an hour in a common cast metal pot. A capacious wooden dish, with a handle somewhat shorter than that of a ladle, is then produced, containing a quantity of milk or cream, with a good slice of butter. Upon this there is poured, by means of a kind of dividing spoon or ladle, as much of the boiling tea as,

with the aid of a little stirring, melts the butter; after which, the whole composition is thrown into the pot, and boiled for a few minutes longer, when it is considered to be fit for use. The only other ingredient I observed, was a little salt. It was served out in large wooden cups or ladles, and having been good in its kind, drunk much better than I anticipated, and with a slice of bread made an excellent breakfast. The ingredients were, all of them, clean and wholesome, and though differently combined, (the butter and salt being put into the tea, instead of being eaten, as with us, upon the bread) it occurred to me they were the very same that enter into a plain breakfast in Scotland, among those who drink tea without sugar. The whole company were loud in their praises of it, and I have little doubt that, in their estimation, it is as much superior to our tea, as good Highland whisky is to port wine, in the opinion of a native of the Grampians, or of the Western Isles. I understand, that among the Tartars it is reckoned a kind of first rate entertainment; and when it is known to be preparing in one house, the neighbours from the adjacent tenements are too wise to suffer the precious opportunity of getting a sip of it, by the bye, to pass unimproved. In the present instance, a good number of them had assembled, in the hope of coming in for a share of what was going; and

while the repast was getting ready, we embraced the opportunity thus offered us, of drawing their attention to "the meat which endureth unto eternal life."

In conversing with us, one of the Tartars, a Mirza, (but in reduced circumstances) took the lead, and acted as chief speaker. After he had proceeded so far as to explain himself distinctly, his opinion, like that of the greater part of his countrymen, was, that God had given to every people the religion most suitable for them, and that each of them should be satisfied with their own. He had been long in the interior of Russia, and had seen their religion; he had been in Germany, France, and other parts of Europe, where he had an opportunity of observing the forms of worship which obtained in them, and the impression left on his mind, from a review of the whole, was, that the religion practised in each of these countries, was good for its inhabitants. The religion of Mohammed, as practised by his countrymen, was, in like manner, good for them; and any alteration of their established forms improper, or, to say the least, unnecessary. In order to expose the fallacy and danger of an opinion which, according to him, had been the result of extensive observation, and which was looked up to by his neighbours as having something in it approaching to oracular; it occurred, that instead of setting out

by telling him his opinion was a delusion, it might answer a better purpose to attempt leading him to make the discovery himself; and for this purpose, we began with some remarks respecting the character of God, and the state of religion in the early ages of the world—a period, to the history of which, his jaundiced eye was less likely to give a false colouring, than that of modern times. God, we remarked, is one. To the truth of this, he instantly assented, as being a fundamental article of the Mohammedan faith. Availing ourselves of this concession, we proceeded as follows: In the times of the patriarchs and prophets, who, you must acknowledge, were holy men, there was just one way of worshiping the true God. The patriarch Noah, by whom the ark was built, for the salvation of his house, in a time of great corruption and wickedness, worshipped God in the same way with Enoch and other holy men who had gone before him. The patriarchs which followed him down to the time of the prophet Moses, worshipped God in the same way that he had done. The true religion, in these primitive times, like its author, was everywhere one and the same. In process of time, Moses was sent by God to instruct his chosen people, the Israelites, in what manner to serve the God of their fathers. The institutions of Moses continued in force till the coming of Christ, in

whom they received their fulfilment, and, during the whole of that period, the faithful were commanded to worship God, in every particular, according to the revelation he had given them of his will. The language of Scripture on this point, was peremptory, and left no room for two opinions. "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." After the coming of Christ, who, as the Coran and your own Effendis acknowledge, was the prophet of God, the true religion continued, as formerly, to be one. On the point, the language of the apostles was not less explicit than that of the Old Testament prophets, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." This was the state of things in ancient times, long before the coming of Mohammed. In these times, there were many false religions, but only one religion recognised by God and his prophets as true. Is it, then, supposeable, we asked, that while God continues unchangeably the same, there should now be as many true religions as there are nations, who profess to worship him? or that all of these should be equally acceptable? From pointing out the improbability of the maxim, we were proceeding to shew the danger of it, in leading men to place a superstitious confidence in a bare

profession of the religion which happened to be adopted by their fathers, without ascertaining, as all men ought to do, what was the religion given by God himself, to be observed by his creatures. This would have opened the way for leading the attention of the Mirza and his countrymen to the claims of the Christian religion on their undivided attention, as being the only one which pointed out the way of salvation to perishing sinners. But as the Calmuc tea was ready, and as the Tartars wish, in general, to be excused from talking much at their meals, we paused, in the hope of having it in our power to resume the conversation with him after breakfast; in which, however, we were disappointed, for after coming in for a first share of the welcome beverage, he affected to have business to do, and retired.

After the retreat of the Mirza, a new turn was given to the conversation, by some incidental references made to the progress of the plague, which is now raging beyond the Cuban. One of the guests enquired if our books contained any infallible cure for that destructive malady. We answered in the negative, and after adverting to the state of medical science in our country, took occasion, from the question proposed, to tell them that our books made known an infallible cure for a still more dreadful malady—for sin, the source of all hu-

man misery in this life and that which is to come. The physician, we told them, who administered the medicine, was the Messiah; the medicine itself was his blood, which cleanseth from all sin. We then adverted to the special advantages enjoyed by people in our country, who could, most of them, read the books for themselves in their own language; in consequence of which, those of them who wished to be restored to health, were furnished with the means of detecting the impositions which interested and designing pretenders to skill, had often made it their business to practise upon the ignorant. This idea seemed to strike them forcibly, and led to several further explanations respecting the method of salvation, and the state of religion and morals among those who could read the Scriptures, and did so with a view to be benefited by them, contrasted with the state of things among those who had not the Scriptures in their native languages, and were guided in their spiritual concerns by the prescriptions of their Effendis. Their attention seemed to be still more powerfully arrested by these plain unvarnished accounts of the real state of the case. They looked, some of them at us, others at their companions, in a way that indicated a secret approbation of the wisdom of putting the Scriptures into the hands of all—enlivened by emotions of wonder at the strange things we brought to their

ears. One of them, after glancing at his fellows, asked if our religion was the same with that of the Russians. In reply, we told them, there was a difference in some of our opinions and ceremonies, just as there were shades of difference between them and other Mohammedans; but that the Bible in use among the Russians, was exactly the same as ours, and that his Majesty, the emperor, and a great many other good people throughout the empire, had been so delighted with the effects produced by the circulation of the Scriptures in the language of the other nations of Europe, that an order had been given to translate the Angile from the Slavonic language, which, at present, was not well understood by the common people, into the modern Russ, which was understood by all ranks, and that the four Gospels had actually been published, and received by the Russians with strong demonstrations of joy. On hearing this, the hearts of the poor people seemed, by sympathy, to participate in the joy of their Russian neighbours; their eyes beamed with a brighter lustre; we looked at them; but while we hoped they might remember the things they had heard, and by means of them be roused from that drowsy lethargy to which their countrymen have become a prey, we could not help being touched with feelings of a very different complexion, from an apprehension that "the

enemy might come and take away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." If they venture to speak with approbation of what they have heard, the Effendis will not scruple a moment to fall upon ways and means "to catch it away." May the God of heaven turn the counsels of these blind guides into foolishness.

Returned to the zemlinka, and had begun to bring forward my journal, when Mr Galloway, who was on the look-out for some of the natives, came and announced that Seid Effendi was at the gate on horseback, but could not light, as he, with several others, were on their way to a cardon (out-post) where an examination was to take place, with a view to trace, if possible, who had been the murderers of the two Cossacks who had been found assassinated in the neighbourhood. I was of course introduced to the Effendi, who expressed his regret, that as business called him elsewhere, he could not wait upon us at present, but hoped the examination would soon be over, in which case he could be back in time to call upon us in the afternoon.

In the course of the forenoon, a number of the natives, and, among others, a Molla, favoured us with a visit. The subject introduced by Mr Galloway, was the depravity of man. The Molla, to whom this seemed a

strange doctrine, asked how we knew that all were sinners. It was answered, that the doctrine was plainly taught in the writings of the Old and New Testament, which were from God,—that sin prevailed in all ages, and among all nations,—that the instructions of the best teachers had failed to cure the evil, and that the most eminent saints had acknowledged and lamented its truth. Well, said the Molla, do you know of any way of deliverance from sin? It was answered, that God himself had provided a Saviour, and given intimation of this to sinners from the earliest ages. We then set before him the doctrine of Christ's atonement, and the reasons why his one offering came to be so valuable as to prove the reconciliation of all who believe and obey him; taking occasion at the same time, to shew what a powerful influence the belief of this doctrine has on the hearts of the faithful, in leading them to love God, and repose an unshaken confidence in Christ, for bringing them through all the troubles of life to the mansions of bliss above.

At this stage of the conversation, one of the Molla's right-hand neighbours remarked, that they had now heard us long, and as they had some things to say, they wished for an opportunity to do so. This, we replied, is perfectly reasonable:—say on. The Molla then proceeded to tell us, they felt very much hurt on

finding the Messiah was called the Son of God in the New Testament. In attempting to satisfy them on this point, we remarked that God, in speaking of himself and of the Messiah, was pleased to adopt the language of men, and to use similitudes taken from objects and relations with which we are familiar, and that in order to understand the real meaning of the figure employed, it was necessary to fix our attention on the principal ideas, without expecting a coincidence in every circumstance connected with them. In the present instance, a particular relation was pointed out by the word *Son*, in contemplating which we must lay aside all such ideas suggested by the term, in its application to men, as we know to be incompatible with the nature of God, who is a spirit. Having remarked farther, that, in a subordinate sense, the holy angels, and even good men, are called God's sons, we read the following passage from the first chapter of Luke's Gospel, and offered such explanations as it struck us might, by the blessing of God, go far to correct their notions, and remove their prejudices: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." In opposition to our statements, the Molla averred

that Mohammed was the father of Christ,* a position which Mr G. set aside by a process of reasoning which it is unnecessary to detail. It proceeded on the obvious consideration, that Mohammed, who was born nearly six centuries after the incarnation of the Messiah, could not be recognized as his father, even on the supposition that the soul of Mohammed existed from the beginning, without admitting the manifest absurdity, that immaterial spirits might be the fathers of material bodies, the constituent parts of which are dust.

Having heard us on this point, the Molla proceeded as follows:

For whose sake was the world made?

Missionaries. God made all things for himself for the manifestation of his glory.

Molla. All things were made for the sake of Mohammed.

M. How came you to know this?

Molla. I have been told by persons who knew it to be so.

M. Is there any such doctrine as this taught in the Coran?

Molla. Do you believe that the Coran came from God?

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* Mr Galloway tells me it is only within these few years that the Mohommedans on the lines have broached this opinion, and when hard put to it they give it up for the most part as untenable.

M. We can find no evidence of its having come from God; and if you know of any we will thank you to tell us.

Molla. We have the evidence of history, that it was taken down by an amanuensis from the mouth of Mohammed, the prophet of God, as he delivered it.

M. We do not dispute its having been committed to writing as Mohammed delivered it; but we wish for evidence, that, in rehearsing it, he spoke under the inspiration of God.

Molla. We have the evidence of tradition as well as of history.

M. In a matter of such importance as the divine original of a book which professes to be from God, the vague traditions of men are not to be trusted. We wish to know what evidence there is, that, in reciting his visions to his amanuensis, he delivered doctrines revealed to him by God, and not the effusions of his own imagination. Moses and Jesus Christ could appeal to the works they had done, in proof of their divine mission. What proofs of this kind have been furnished by Mohammed?

Molla. Mohammed was the prophet of God, and he told his disciples that the Coran had come from heaven.

M. In a matter of such moment, his bare word is not to be trusted. Where is the evidence that God sent him?

Molla. What evidence have you that Moses and Jesus Christ were sent by God?

M. They performed such miracles as none could have performed except God had been with them. Their miracles were performed openly,—those of Moses, in the presence of the Egyptians and of the whole congregation of the children of Israel;—those of Jesus Christ, in various parts of the Holy Land, in the presence of friends and foes.

During the whole of this discussion on the subject of evidence, the Molla seemed to be extremely uneasy; and the only reply he made to our remarks on the publicity of the miracles of Moses and Christ, was, The Taurat and the Angile have no doubt come from God. This we acknowledge; and ye ought also to acknowledge the Divine origin of the Coran. When about to point out to him, that, so far from being our duty to receive the pretended revelation of their prophet, it was our wisdom to reject it, Mr G. remarked to me, that he had in a manner given up the argument; and that possibly it might be better to let it rest at the point to which we had brought it, than to push it farther.

The only other question he had to propose, respected the condition of departed souls; and we answered it nearly in the terms of the sacred writers. Shewed him a copy of the He-

brew Bible and Greek Testament, the sacred originals of our books. After looking at them, the Molla and his friends slunk off one by one, without bidding us good day, or giving any hint of their intention to return.

Made some enquiries at the Armenian and others respecting the Iambuluks, whom we intended to visit, if practicable, before our return. From all we could learn, it appeared they had removed from the spot where they were last visited by Mr Galloway, and pitched their tents a great way farther off, in a quarter of the steppe as distant from our lodgings as they are from Karass, i. e. about ninety versts. In these circumstances, it struck us that it would be adventurous for us to attempt searching out their abode at such a distance in the steppe, when winter was at the door; and that the most eligible plan would be, to pass the Sabbath here, to visit the Jestan Tartars about fifty versts down the Clous water on Monday, and thence to return by Alexandrofskie and Georghievsk to Karass in the course of the ensuing week.

Having agreed to follow out this arrangement as far as circumstances permitted, we resolved on taking a ride in the mean time to a neighbouring village, which we entertained the hope of being able to do, and be at our lodgings before the sun went down, to converse with Seid Effendi, or any of the other

inhabitants who might choose to favour us with their company.

In this excursion, we were accompanied by our host, who, on reaching the village, introduced us to a brother Armenian, in whose house we had a short conversation with a few of the natives. They were ignorant of the one thing needful, and thoughtless in the extreme. They admitted, indeed, that all were sinners, but seemed to have no sense of the evil of sin, or of their danger in being enemies to God by nature and practice. On being asked, they told us, that the way to be delivered from sin was, to fast, and pray, and give alms to the poor. We enquired if a change of heart was necessary to salvation? At first they declared there was no necessity for it; but on being questioned more closely, they admitted, that without this, admission to paradise was not to be expected. From these concessions we took occasion to explain the doctrine of regeneration; endeavoured to check the levity which appeared in their whole deportment, when spoken to respecting the concerns of eternity; and urged on their attention the necessity of listening to the glad tidings of the gospel, as being the only way of obtaining the salvation of which they and all men stood in need.

On returning to our lodgings, were informed that Seid Effendi and some of the other villagers had been detained as hostages, till

measures were taken to discover the murderers of the Cossaks. The news seemed to throw a damp over the whole village; and as the discussions which it occasioned engrossed their whole attention, our hopes were not sanguine, that any considerable number of them would assemble, either this evening or to-morrow, with a view to hear tidings which, though of infinitely greater consequence, are often made to yield to the concerns of the present world, by multitudes whose knowledge and professions are incomparably superior to those of the poor Tartars.

When night set in, we found we had run short of candles; and to supply the defect, the Armenian had recourse to an expedient, the sight of which was sufficiently amusing. A fragment of an old kettle served for a cruse, tallow for oil, and a piece of dry dung for a wick,—and in a trice every corner of the zemlinka was illuminated.

In the course of the evening, three or four Tartars called, and one of them in particular listened with very great attention to the things that were spoken. After Mr G. had discoursed with them long, we took occasion to direct their attention to an idea which had commended itself to some of their friends in the morning, but which, at that time, we could do little more than touch upon, as the company was about to break up, viz. that as God had from

the beginning appointed one and the same way of salvation for sinners of Adam's family, so he had commanded the revelations given to the prophets and apostles to be published to the people at large. This we illustrated from the instructions given to the whole congregation of the Israelites by Moses, and the state of matters in the Jewish church, at different times, down to the manifestation of Christ in the flesh; as well as from the command given by our Lord, to search the Scriptures, and the commendations bestowed on those who did so, by the apostles.

The principle we contended for, and the remarks made in illustration of it, appeared to them highly reasonable and proper; and we have little doubt that the contrast between the publicity given the Scriptures by enlightened Christians, and the mystery in which every thing is veiled by their Effendis, left a favourable impression on their minds. To these statements we added a number of practical things, which, it struck us, might be of more advantage when about to retire, than a lecture concerning the impositions practised upon them by their Effendis, to whom, with all their faults, some of which are sufficiently glaring, they have too strong an attachment, to feel much pleasure in hearing them exposed.

Nov. 7. The morning dull and heavy, indi-

cating the approach of a storm. Before mid-day it began to snow, and continued doing so without much intermission till the evening. The man who seemed so much interested last night, called in company with an old man, whom we supposed he had brought along with him to hear the gospel. Endeavoured to lead their attention to Christ crucified, and explain to them any points connected with our discourse, which they did not distinctly comprehend, or on which they wished for information. The fall of snow made it equally uninviting for us to go out in quest of persons to hear, and for them to visit us in our lodgings. In the course of the day, however, a few of the natives called, beside the individuals just mentioned, and among others a student, with whom we discoursed long on the gospel salvation,—and a young lad, who seemed to feel a deep interest in what was spoken, and listened with a degree of attention that I have seldom seen surpassed. When others were coming and going he remained unmoved, and continued with us for a considerable time after his countrymen, young and old, had withdrawn.

In the course of the evening, John read for a considerable time in the Tartar-Turkish Testament, for the information of the Armenian, who, though he understood the language, has not been taught to read it. He had a copy of the Testament in his possession, which he

told us he was in the habit of putting into the hands of the students when they happened to call upon him, and requesting them to read it, taking care not to venture it out of his sight, lest they should destroy it. We enquired if the Tartars were in the habit of destroying the Testament when they got their hands upon it? He assured us that they were, and that some of them were so inveterate that they would tear it before his eyes were he to permit them. We left another copy with him, that he might have it in his power to lend it, should he meet with any among them he could trust, under a promise to return it for the use of others; supposing that this might operate as a partial check upon their ferocity.*

Nov. 8. About four in the morning Mr G.

* I understand it is to the fiery zeal and rapacity of the students, and other scholars, that we are to trace the greater part of the outrages committed on the sacred volume. In cases where illiterate people have got copies of the Testament, to be given to friends who are capable of reading them, they were not unfrequently brought back and lodged with the missionaries, when their friends at a distance would not accept of them, or when a favourable opportunity of getting them conveyed did not occur. But the students in general are less scrupulous, when their zeal is roused or their cupidity awakened; in which cases the consequences are such as have already been described. See Journal, November 4th.

looked out of the zemlinka, and was surprised to find the horses away from the place where they had been stationed last night. On hearing this John started up, and, after a short search, found them at a little distance from the village, on the other side of a hollow, which in its day seems to have served as the bed of a rivulet.

Had the weather been favourable, it was our intention to proceed to the Jetsans, in pursuance of the arrangements agreed to on Saturday; but the fall of snow in the course of yesterday suggested to us the propriety of pausing, and considering all the circumstances of the case, before proceeding farther. It appeared, on enquiry, that this is the time at which the greater part of the winter snows fall in the interior of Russia, a circumstance which makes travelling much more inconvenient than at any other season of the year, except perhaps at the breaking-up of the sledge roads in the spring. It is true, the snows are seldom deep in the steppe; but the soil, being a mixture of fine sand and clay, impregnated with salt, the roads become extremely heavy, unless the frost be so intense as to give them a coating sufficiently hard to bear a sledge, which seldom happens in this quarter till the beginning of December. Mr Galloway had visited the Jetsans and Iambuluks formerly, and was of course prepared to answer most of the queries

necessary for the information of the Directors. We had already been three days among the Tartars at the head of the Clous, the only tribe in this quarter which Mr G. had not an opportunity of visiting till now in their own villages. Having seen this place, therefore, we were furnished with the means of giving a general view of the whole range of Tartar villages for about 150 versts north of Karass, which embraces an extent of country sufficiently capacious for a large itinerancy, whenever it is in the power of the Directors to order the ground to be occupied. We resolved, therefore, to decline proceeding farther northward, till circumstances were more favourable, and to return to the colony without loss of time, lest we should be storm-stayed by a new fall of snow, and become burdensome to our host, who refused taking a single cupeik for the entertainment he afforded us.

On consulting with him respecting the most eligible arrangements for the journey, he told us that he feared it would be almost impossible for the horses (being unshod) to drag the sledge up the acclivity we had to ascend, in passing the mountain-range on our way to the head of the Cullish water; but was of opinion the point might be gained by means of oxen, adding, that if we thought of trying this plan, he would secure them to us from some of the Tartars. As the proposed arrangement seemed

to be a good one, we requested him to procure four oxen for us accordingly, which he did in a trice, for the trifling sum of a ruble and a half (18d.) for eight versts.

A few minutes before our departure, Mr G. who was in the court-yard, called out to me with considerable emotion, Come, and hear the Tartars. On doing so, my ears were struck with a doleful wailing, which issued from a distant part of the village, in accents so wild and frantic, as to fill the mind with a secret kind of horror. He told me it was the voice of mourners lamenting the decease of some departed friend or neighbour, whose spirit had just winged its way to the invisible world. This led to some remarks on the Mohammedan creed, in reference to the state of the dead, and the functions of the two examiners, Nunkir and Munkir, from a view of which, it is obvious to infer the anguish that must fill the hearts of survivors, as there is seldom much hope that their friend is so holy as to rank among the 70,000 who are destined to enter paradise without suffering. (See Sale's Coran, Prel. Disc.) After thanking our host for the very great attentions he had shown us, we took our leave of him, and proceeded toward the bottom of the mountain range in our telega, drawn by the oxen, while John took charge of the horses. The driver of the four oxen was the man who, in our introductory conversation

on Friday, had met all our arguments and explanations by vociferating, "There is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet." He had sometimes been present at subsequent conversations, but from that time forward had contented himself with sitting in the capacity of a hearer. On reaching the bottom of the range, we observed columns of drifted snow rising here and there a little in the advance of us, in a form which bespoke the operation of a kind of whirlwind. The driver, on having the phenomenon pointed out to him, remarked that there was often a strong wind swirling along the side of the mountain, even when there was little wind in the adjacent steppe, and to this he attributed the drifting of the snow in the particular form in which it met the eye. In this he was no doubt correct; and the manner in which it played along the side of the mountain, enabled me to form a clearer conception of the drifting of the snow on Alburrows, and of the difficulty it must occasion to adventurers who may attempt to ascend it, than when I first heard the circumstance adverted to by Shorah.*

After about an hour's hard pulling from the bottom of the mountain (and two hours from the village), we reached its summit, which was

* See Journal, 20th October.

enveloped in a thick mist, that prevented us from seeing the distant scenery which had engaged our attention on our way to the Clous on Friday. Having taken the oxen out of the kibitki, and put to the horses in their room, we took our leave of the Tartar by whom we had been conducted thither, and continued our course for the Mirza's Conack-house at the Cullish, which we reached about mid-afternoon.

In the course of the evening, when discoursing to the natives respecting the necessity of coming to Christ for salvation, one of them asked, What is meant by coming to Christ? We answered, it was to believe that God had sent him into the world to save sinners, and to embrace him as our own Saviour accordingly; adding, that there was "none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved;" and consequently, that if any man refused to come to him, his destruction was inevitable. The case, we remarked farther, might be illustrated by an example:—Suppose the inhabitants of a particular province had rebelled against his Majesty the Emperor, and joined the public enemy beyond the frontiers, and that the Emperor, in compassion to the rebels, were to send a messenger with a promise of pardon and restoration to his favour, provided they returned to their allegiance in the manner pointed out by the

messenger, assuring them at the same time, that, in the event of their not accepting pardon, when it was offered, they should be considered as enemies, and treated accordingly. In this case, those who believed the Emperor's word, as reported by the messenger, and wished to be reconciled to him, would come to the messenger and follow out the instructions he had given them, and their doing so would be an evidence that they had full confidence in his Majesty's clemency. In like manner sinners are invited to come to Christ, in other words, to believe in his name, and be reconciled to God. If they accept the invitation, they will be saved; if they do not, they must perish. —That, he replied, I can never believe.—You are not the first of many millions, it was answered, who have rejected the counsel of God against themselves; many of whom are now repenting of their folly in the place where there is no hope.—I will as soon cut my throat, added he, as believe that a man can be saved by coming to Christ. I will never believe that.—We answered him, with all the gravity in our power, If you will not believe, there is no help for it. You have been told the truth, and if you reject the gospel, you must answer for it to God at the judgment of the great day. We could not help feeling shocked at this man's impious temerity, and Mr G. warned him most solemnly, in a short address, to

think of the consequences of his levity and wickedness ere it was too late, when the day of mercy should be hid from his eyes.

Meanwhile the steward of the house treated himself to a seat on a cake of dried dung by the side of a large fire, the heat of which, it should seem had produced a degree of itchiness not to be endured, without an attempt to remove the uneasy sensation. Heedless of those ideas of decorum, which are customary in our country, he threw aside his shube and began to scratch his arms, &c. with a vehemence that astonished us. Judging from appearances, however, this only served to make matters worse, and therefore to make sure work, he set about an operation which came nearer the root of the evil; for having thrown off all his clothes, he turned his shirt inside out and commenced a pursuit in which he made sundry captures, and being destitute of that clemency which some of the Mohammedans consider as virtues, he put the captives instantly to death. Mr G. asked him how he did not think of getting his shirt washed? to which he answered in few words, that it was because he had not another to put on; to which he subjoined a most lamentable and pathetic description of his circumstances, in the hope, no doubt, of moving our compassion, and perhaps securing something for acting his part so well. When describing the history of his own captivity,

(for he had been stolen from the mountains and sold), a pen knife which John happened to be using, caught his attention, and excited his cupidity. John had no mind to want his knife, as it was the only one he had, and could not be readily replaced; but so importunate were the intreaties of the poor steward, and so affecting the contrast he instituted between their respective circumstances (in the Cabardian language, which was known only to themselves), that John could no longer say him nay, and made him a present of the knife accordingly.* It appeared, however, to be

* In watching an opportunity for begging, the slaves in this country imitate the example of their masters as closely as a sprightly valet does the air and manners of his lord in Europe. One of their Mirzas, who called upon us in the colony, having observed my Bochavian gown, requested Mr G. to tell me he would consider it as a pledge of friendship, if I would make him a present of it. He urged his petition, in presence of a brother Mirza, and some others, for upward of a quarter of an hour, with so much importunity and address, that Mr G. afterwards declared, he was sure I could not have refused him had the representation been laid before me in detail; and for this reason he put him off by adverting to the customs of Europeans, reminding him at the same time, that I was only a stranger, and could not be expected to give away my clothes. In reply, he assured Mr G. that if I were to ask his shube (worth three or four of my gown) or any thing else he had about him, it should instantly be at my service. The circumstance of my being a stranger, however, in connection with Mr G.'s refusal to explain the whole case, served, in part, to

understood on both hands, that, in consequence of begging and accepting the knife, the steward became for the time the servant of his benefactor, who, being exhausted and weary with driving the telega through the snow, went to bed, and gave orders to his temporary vassal to air his wet boots at the fire, and perform divers other services which we should scarcely have felt ourselves at liberty to ask. The orders were obeyed with the utmost promptitude, which made my brother Mr G. remark, with a smile, You see how *nogarlick* begins.* When considering the most eligible arrangements for prosecuting our journey homeward, it occurred that, by engaging oxen to pull the telega through the snow upon the heights, and

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save my credit. In a case of this kind, a refusal is considered as a sufficient reason for breaking up even a most intimate friendship; and therefore a petition, when well urged, is generally granted by men who have any pretensions to honour. It is understood, however, that when occasion serves, the *donor* may beg in his turn, and in most cases the natives are too wise not to avail themselves of the privileges secured to them by the laws of honour which obtain among their countrymen.

* A nogar is a kind of retainer under the protection of a superior, who, though he cannot sell him as a slave, has a right to demand certain services, (some of them humiliating enough) for favours accepted by himself or his predecessors from the chaftian to whom he is attached. *Nogarlick* is a word derived from *nogar*, as *vassalage* is from *vassal*, or *slavery* from *slave*.

keeping the horses fresh till we reached the declivity which overlooks the vale of the Cuma, we might be enabled, if the weather proved favourable, to reach the colony to-morrow night; and upon enquiry we found a student who engaged to take us over the heights (eighteen or twenty versts) accordingly, for two rubles and a half.

Nov. 9. Left the Conack-house about day-break, and proceeded for the heights, through a thick mist, which continued to overspread the whole country. In our progress, the student hurt us much by indulging in a vice which is very prevalent among the Tartars—that of profane swearing, which so disgusted Mr Galloway that he remonstrated with him on the impropriety of his conduct, in taking the name of God in vain. He admitted that it was wrong to take the name of God in vain, but could see no harm in using it as he did, because we are commanded to do every thing in the name of God.* Mr G. reminded him

* This maxim is perpetually in the mouths of the Mohammedans; and they generally make the same use of it that the steward did. If they have occasion to kill a cow or a sheep, its throat is cut in the name of God. The same form is observed, I am told, if any of them should take it into his head to steal his neighbour's horse, or perpetrate any other act of wickedness.

that prayer should proceed from the heart, whereas it was manifest that the loose exclamations which he was pleased to dignify with the name of prayers, were, to say the least, mere words of course, uttered without any suitable impressions of the majesty of God. Still he could not see the justness of the application of the general principle to any thing he had said. A few minutes after, however, his oxen which, though steady, were stubborn and troublesome, provoked his indignation to such a pitch, that he exclaimed, "May God strike you dead!" Mr G. then asked him if he really wished in his heart that God would strike the oxen to the ground, in answer to his prayer? Surely not, replied the student, that would be a sad thing indeed. Why, then, it was asked, do you pray to God to do what you have no wish should take place? Nay, what you would deprecate as a great calamity? Was not this a taking of the name of God in vain?—Confounded at these questions, the fellow sunk dumb, and for a few minutes was apparently thoughtful. His thoughtfulness, however, was but momentary; for scarcely had a quarter of an hour elapsed, till he resumed a subject on which he had been harping every few minutes since we left the village, viz. that Mr Galloway would give him a few cupeiks over and above the stipulated hire. A few cupeiks, to be sure, was a trifling concern,

but Mr G. had agreed to give him two rubles and a half, as he was just at hand, and willing to go, rather than lose time in going through the village, under cloud of night, in quest of others who might perhaps have done the business for half a ruble less; and therefore he gave him no hope. Meanwhile we were met by some arbas from Beshtow, drawn by oxen, which were going at a much quicker pace than his. Had your oxen gone on like these, said Mr G. you might have asked a little more with some kind of grace; but when moving so slowly, how can you expect additional hire? This stopped his mouth, in as far as the cupeiks were concerned; but as it did not make him lose his presence of mind, he soon preferred another petition, which he urged with equal earnestness, viz that Mr G. would give him as much Calmuc tea as would do for a breakfast to himself and a few friends. We allowed him to be talking, however, without telling him whether he should have the tea or not, till we saw how he finished his business. Were overtaken by some students on horseback, on their way to Sultan village, to read the Coran under one of the Effendis. They had come from the Cullish, and, knowing who we were, expressed a wish to have some of our books; and, having promised most solemnly not to destroy them, we gave the senior student a copy of the New Testament, and another of them a

copy of the Psalms, with suitable admonitions. Reached the tumulus on the top of the ridge, to which the student had stipulated to conduct us, from which, after substituting our horses in room of his oxen, we prepared for continuing our course to the Cuma, while he took the road back to the Cullish, with evident symptoms of self-gratulation, at the idea of having acted his part so well, as to secure from the gewars as much tea as would serve for a repast to himself and his companions on reaching the Conack-house.

By the time we left the tumulus, the mist which overspread the face of the country began to be dissipated; part of it still hovering above the elevated range behind us, while a vast body of it overhung the vale of the Cuma before us, with an air of sublime majesty superior to any thing of the kind I had ever witnessed. Its milky surface had a most enchanting appearance, overlooked as it was by the mountains on the opposite side of the vale, and broken here and there by the craggy rocks, which skirted the sides of the Beshtow, or reared their spiral summits, at irregular distances, amid the floating element. It was mid-day, and as we approached the vale, the sun-beams melted the rime which had clung to the bushy weeds the whole of yesterday, which made us remark what a striking emblem we had before us, of the sweet influences of the gospel,

compared with the terrors of the law. Yesterday the rime retained its hold in defiance of the whistling wind which swept the side of the mountain that overlooks the great Calmuc steppe. To-day, with scarcely a breath of wind, it loses its hold and drops to the ground, before the beams of the sun. Crossed the Cuma a little below Sultan village, about two o'clock, and, having dined on its southern bank, continued our course around the northern base of Gilantow, and reached the colony in health and safety, soon after the stars had begun to shew their sparkling orbs in the azure sky.

When reflecting, in the course of the evening, on the incidents which had occurred during our short excursion, we saw much reason for thankfulness to our heavenly Father, for the temporal comforts we had enjoyed in the midst of any untoward circumstances; and a certain kind of satisfaction at the idea, that though the number we had spoken to was comparatively small, and the opposition to the gospel, generally speaking, strong, there was nevertheless a disposition discovered by some of the Tartars to listen to the glad tidings of salvation, and a sensation produced on the minds of a few, which might lead to further enquiry, and, by the blessing of God, open the way for others to labour with more success in this unfriendly soil.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS, &c.

During our excursion to the Clous, and after our return, the most eligible mode of prosecuting our endeavours to evangelize the Mohammedans in this quarter, frequently became the subject of conversation. The substance of our remarks on this subject may be summed up as follows.

Supposing that provision is made that there be at least one missionary always upon the spot in the colony, to receive and converse with such of the natives as may call at the mission-house for instruction, then,

1*st*, The district, at some distance from Karass, might be divided into itinerancies, within the boundaries of which the inhabitants should be visited on some regular plan, and instructed in the principles of religion. Schools might be instituted where it was practicable.

2*d*, For each itinerancy there should be two missionaries, one or both of whom should be masters of the native language. In cases where two missionaries cannot be procured, one of their places might be supplied by a qualified interpreter, when such could be found; but

except on some rare occasions, a missionary should not be called upon to visit his itinerancy single-handed.

3d, The number of itinerancies might in the first instance be limited to two, exclusive of the villages bordering on Karass, which might be visited, as opportunity offered, by the pastor of the colony. The one of these might be called the north itinerancy, under which might be included, 1. Sultan village, &c. on the Cuma, fifteen versts from Karass, in number about 300 families; 2. The villages on Cullish water, thirty-five versts from Sultan village, and fifty from Karass, about 500 families; 3. The villages at the head of the Clous water, forty versts from Cullish and ninety from the colony, about 400 families; 4. The Jetsans, forty versts north-east of said villages, further down the same rivulet, about 150 families; 5. The Iambuluks, visited formerly by Mr Galloway, whose abode in summer is on the Clous water, about fifty versts from the Jetsans and seventy from Alexandrofskie, about 1000 families. From thence back to the colony, through the Russian villages, may be 150 versts, or three days journey. Allowing one day for Sultan village, which may be easily reached with a moderately good horse before breakfast;—one day for travelling to, and another for continuing at, each of the other four stations, and three days for returning, the itinerancy would

occupy twelve days; consequently, if begun on the Monday of one week, it might be finished on the Friday of the next. The population of this itinerancy may be estimated at from twelve to sixteen thousand, exclusive of a multitude of Tartars, who might be visited once or twice each summer, farther to the north-east in the Calmuc steppe.

The other may be named the east itinerancy, from its general bearing with respect to Karass. It lies between the Terek and the Cuma, about three days journey from the colony, and contains a numerous population of Jetsans, Iambuluks, and Kara-Tartars, Trukmen, &c. who, being independent of their Mirzas, have fewer political difficulties to deter them from embracing the Christian faith, than the Mohammedans in the vicinity of Karass. In these itinerancies, a circuit should be made regularly once every three weeks or month, as was found most answerable, from the end of March to the beginning of November; and if possible once or twice (should the weather be favourable) in the course of the winter. The winter service, however, should be optional, as it might often, in a hard winter, be too adventurous to make the tour of them. And indeed all the itinerating missionaries, like soldiers admitted to the honour of storming a fortress, should be volunteers in this service.

4th, Were the country between the present Russian lines and the snow mountains brought into the same order with that on the north of them, other two itinerancies might be occupied, —one of them on the south, in the Cabardian country, which, supposing Shorah correct in stating that, after all the ravages committed by the plague, &c. there are still 5000 men able to bear arms, must contain a population of perhaps 30,000;—the other embracing the Tartars south-east of the Russian lines on the Cuban, and a number of Abaza villages near the source of the Cuma, though a little to the south of a line due-west, might, to distinguish it from the others, be called the western itinerancy. These last two, however, could not be occupied at present, without imminent danger, and are mentioned merely to give a view of the Mohammedan population, which might be visited in pursuance of a regular system of itinerating, were political obstacles removed by the subjection of banditti, &c. to the Russian government, an event which is not at all improbable, and which, there is reason to conclude, would be a blessing to the inhabitants at large, both in respect of this life and that which is to come.

With respect to the encouragement afforded, in the adorable providence of God, for prosecuting the cultivation of this missionary field, (how unfruitful soever it may have been here-

tofore) I beg leave to refer the Directors to the following extract of a public letter of the brethren here, whose experience and opportunities for making observations on this subject, are much greater than mine. "January 1, 1820. We have indeed been denied the pleasure of seeing any set free from the bondage in which they are held, yet we rejoice that the word gone abroad is, by the operation of the Spirit of God, mighty to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin and corruption; and, amidst all the misgivings to which we are apt to become a prey, as we think of the hardness of their hearts, there is one thing of which we have the fullest assurance, that "the word of the Lord will not return to him void, but that it will accomplish that which he pleases, and prosper in the thing whereto he sends it;" and though we have hitherto been disappointed in the hopes we entertained of particular individuals whose hearts we hoped the Lord had touched; yet, on taking a view of the field we are endeavouring to cultivate, and comparing its present appearance with the aspect it assumed when we first began to break up the fallow-ground, there are some circumstances of an encouraging nature, which it would be improper to pass over unnoticed. Among others, we mention the following:—A sensible diminution of the bitterness discovered by the natives on having their attention directed to the truths

of the gospel. In former times their eyes, the tone of their voice, their every gesture, bespoke the existence of a bitter deep-rooted rancour, which, the moment it was touched, burst forth in angry words, and sometimes in rude behaviour. Traces of this spirit are indeed to be found occasionally still, and of its existence in the hearts of multitudes, there is no room to doubt; but now, the outward expression of it may be considered as a kind of exception to their general behaviour towards us; whereas for years after our arrival, we could scarcely open our mouth in the name of Jesus without feeling its effects. Another circumstance, connected indeed with the one we have just been describing, is a partial abatement of the horror felt by the vulgar, at the idea of being counted gewrs, should they listen to us, and relinquish the religion of their countrymen. Still, it is a term of reproach, and will continue to be so, till the darkness in which they are involved be dispelled; and still the multitude feels a horror at the idea, somewhat akin to that which a devout peasant would feel in our country at the idea of being counted an infidel; but with all these allowances, the abatement in the feeling is such, that many of them can bear to look on the fictitious evil—being reckoned a gewr, without starting back as they would do at the sight of a dragon,

or as a person would avoid one who is infected with the plague. In the course of last month, one of them called on Messrs Glen and Galloway, and declared himself to be a Christian (although he did not wish to confess this before his countrymen), and was willing to be baptised immediately, and submit to any course of discipline we might appoint. Another Mohammedan, who called before the applicant for baptism retired, wished to be informed, whether, if they were embracing our religion, they might live in Naiman village among their countrymen and kindred, or if it behoved them to remove to Karass;—a question which involves in it a kind of acknowledgement, that they could contemplate the idea of living as professed Christians in the midst of Mohammedans, in that village, without being much hurt at being reckoned gewrs, or being seriously alarmed at the effects of the persecuting spirit of their brethren. This inference is the more probable, that we could discover no evidence, alas! of the existence of that faith which overcomes the world, in any of them, and consequently declined doing any thing farther than instructing them more fully in the way of the Lord, and urging them to repeat their visits for instruction, particularly on the Sabbaths,—which, it is to be lamented, they have not done.

"There is only one other circumstance to which we beg leave to advert, as furnishing encouragement not to desist from our labours, —the growth of a spirit of indifference in observing the rites of their own religion. This fact is notorious, and often deplored by their Effendis, as a sign that their religion in this quarter is coming to an end. Now, the more indifferent they become to the rites and the tenets of Islamism, the less formidable are the prejudices to be encountered by the Christian missionaries, in recommending to them the gospel of Christ. We need scarcely remark, that this difference, observable in the field we are cultivating, is the effect of a process which does not by any means imply the commencement of a radical change of heart. But the same almighty power which has produced a perceptible difference in the points adverted to, and partly, we hope, through the instrumentality of your missionaries, may yet render the word preached by us, effectual in turning some of them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the kingdom of God's dear Son. And when it is considered, that, in other quarters, where the labours of missionaries have issued in the conversion of the natives—Otaheite for example, a superficial change somewhat analogous, preceded the throwing away of their idols, and their embracing the Christian religion, may we not indulge

the hope, that the circumstances adverted to, are the probable, though not the certain, prelude of a turning to the Lord, from the delusions of their favourite prophet, the impostor of Mecca?"

In addition to the reasons for cultivating this missionary field, deducible from the above extract, I would beg leave to add, that if the consequences ensue, which may, by the blessing of God, be anticipated from the labours of faithful missionaries, in the itinerancies north of the lines; the way will be opened for introducing the gospel into the mountains, with much greater prospect of success than on supposition the young missionaries were to be stationed chiefly in other settlements, and little more to be attempted here, till the present obstructions to our entering the mountains be removed. Several of the mountain tribes speak dialects of the Tartar language, and, among almost all of them, there are many who understand it; and should it please God to touch the hearts of a few of the Mohammedans who speak that language, within sight of the Caucasian range, much—very much—might be expected from their co-operation in addressing their neighbours the mountaineers, on the great concerns of eternity. Were it necessary to say more on the importance of this station, considered as a central position for itinerating, I would refer you to a circular letter (a copy

of which I had the pleasure of seeing in Mr Paterson's) issued by the Directors when they first heard that Messrs Brunton and he had pitched their tent at the bottom of Beshtow, and within sight of the snow-clad mountains of Caucasus.*

There is still one other point at which I must glance, how reluctantly soever, before closing these remarks, viz. the treatment given the Scriptures in this quarter, by the fiery zealots of Islamism. The idea cannot be contemplated without the most painful emotions. To give away the Scriptures to be destroyed, is an operation at which the heart of a Christian must naturally recoil; and it is scarcely less painful to withhold them from suppliants who are perishing through ignorance of their contents, even though there be strong presumptions of an intention to destroy them; for presumption is not proof. It strikes me, that if regular itinerancies were instituted, something might be done for extricating the missionaries here from this dilemma, by laying it down as a kind of general rule, to lend the books, in the first instance, to those who could read them, on condition they should be forthcoming, when called for, in subsequent tours. To encourage them to read them, they might

* On this subject, see also Mr Dickson's memorial.

be promised as the reward of diligence, and at length gifted altogether, or recalled, as circumstances directed. In order to this, it would be necessary to have the names and places of abode of those to whom they were entrusted. I am aware the remedy would be only partial in its operation; for ways and means would be fallen upon to evade its tendency. But should it serve only as a kind of check, it might be worth making the experiment. Whether it may be necessary to adopt precautions analogous to those in other quarters, it does not become me to say, as my sphere of observation is by far too limited to serve as a stable foundation for general inferences. I hope the mentioning of this abuse, instead of checking the ardour of the friends of pure and undefiled religion, will stimulate their activity, and make them the more strenuous in their endeavours to send living instructors, along with the volume of inspiration, wherever it is practicable, and particularly in Mohammedan countries, where our Scriptures are prejudged, and condemned without a hearing, as little better than forgeries, and consequently are less likely to be read with candour (the wickedness of destroying them out of the question), than among Pagans who have never heard of the name of Jesus, or of the revelation which he has given us respecting the way of life and salvation. Finally, it should be remembered, that the

spirit of delusion which has for ages retained possession of the Mohammedans, is a kind which "goeth not out but by prayer and fasting;" and consequently that, in preaching the gospel, we must humble ourselves in the dust, and ascribe the glory to him, to whom alone it is due, saying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory."

THE END.

EDINBURGH,
Printed by Andrew Jack.

00084006

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 January, 2016

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